REPORT

FROM THE

SELECT COMMITTEE

ON

WESTMEATH, &c. (UNLAWFUL COMBINATIONS);

TOGETHER WITH THE

PROCEEDINGS OF THE COMMITTEE,

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE,

AND APPENDIX.

Ordered, by The House of Commons, *to be Printed,*
31 *March* 1871.

Monday, 6th March 1871.

Ordered, THAT a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the state of Westmeath, and certain parts adjoining of Meath and King's County, and the nature, extent, and effect of a certain unlawful combination and confederacy existing therein.

Thursday, 9th March 1871.

Select Committee nominated:—

Marquis of Hartington.	Mr. James.
Mr. Disraeli.	Mr. Pemberton.
Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland.	Mr. Maguire.
Mr. Hardy.	Mr. Russell Gurney.
Sir George Grey.	Mr. W. H. Gregory.
Colonel Wilson-Patten.	Mr. Bruen.
Mr. Downing.	Mr. Serjeant Sherlock.
Viscount Sandon.	

Ordered, THAT the Committee have power to send for Persons, Papers, and Records.

Ordered, THAT Five be the Quorum of the Committee.

Ordered, THAT the Select Committee have power to report the Evidence taken before them, and their opinion thereon to the House.

Thursday, 16th March 1871.

Ordered, THAT the Select Committee do consist of Seventeen Members.

Ordered, THAT Mr. Chichester Fortescue and Mr. Plunket be added to the Committee.

Friday, 31st March, 1871.

Ordered, THAT the Committee have power to report their Observations to the House.

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REPORT.

THE SELECT COMMITTEE appointed to Inquire into the State of WESTMEATH, and certain parts adjoining of MEATH and KING'S COUNTY, and the Nature, Extent, and Effect of a certain UNLAWFUL COMBINATION and CONFEDERACY existing therein, and who were empowered to Report the Evidence taken before them, and their Opinion thereon to the House;——HAVE considered the matters referred to them, and have agreed to the following REPORT:—

THAT there is at present existing within the county of Westmeath and certain adjoining portions of the county of Meath and of the King's County, an unlawful combination and confederacy of a secret nature, generally known by the name of the Ribbon Society.

That this Ribbon Society has existed for a considerable length of time, and has within the last three years, as compared with those immediately preceding, increased in power and influence.

That owing to the prevalence of this Society, murder and other crimes of the most serious nature have been perpetrated within the district above referred to, and that by reason partly of sympathy with the perpetrators of such crimes, and still more by the terror created by the existence and action of the Society, it has been found to be almost impossible to obtain evidence on which to bring offenders to justice.

That such immunity from detection and consequent punishment has had for its results an encouragement to crime, the diffusion of a spirit of lawlessness, and a corresponding decrease of confidence in the power of the law among the peaceful members of the community.

That this Society, originating in a desire on the part of its members to interfere in an unlawful and violent manner in matters relating to the tenure and occupation of land, has extended the sphere of its operations, and more or less prejudicially affects other relations of life.

That this Society has adherents and supporters among the farming classes in the district, and some sympathisers amongst a certain class of small traders in the towns, but recruits its ranks chiefly from farm servants and daily labourers; and that these persons are under the control of a few individuals who may be looked upon as the heads of the Society, and are alleged to be known as such to the local authorities.

That the Society, besides leading directly to the perpetration of the crimes already mentioned, has infused a feeling of terror into all classes in the district, by reason of which its objects are frequently brought about, without any overt act of violence.

That the Peace Preservation Act, while largely extending the means previously existing for the prevention and detection of crime, and containing for that purpose effective and useful provisions, has not furnished the Executive with all the power necessary to deal with crime of that organised and secret nature which characterises the district in question.

That the Authorities have endeavoured vigorously to carry into effect the existing law, including the Peace Preservation Act; but, owing to the causes referred to, they have rarely been able to make amenable to justice the perpetrators of the crimes, and in no instance any one as a leader or organiser of the Ribbon Society.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE COMMITTEE.

Monday, 12*th March* 1871.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Sir George Grey.
Mr. Bruen.
Mr. Downing.
Mr. Maguire.
Viscount Sandon.
Mr. James.
Mr. Pemberton.
Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland.
Mr. Disraeli.
Mr. Russell Gurney.
Mr. Hardy.
Colonel Wilson-Patten.
Marquis of Hartington.

Marquis of *Hartington* called to the Chair.

The Committee deliberated.

Certain Papers were laid before the Committee by the Chairman, and ordered to be printed.

[Adjourned till Monday next, at Twelve o'clock.

Monday, 20*th March* 1871.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Marquis of HARTINGTON in the Chair.

Mr. Disraeli.
Mr. Hardy.
Mr. Bruen.
Sir George Grey.
Mr. Chichester Fortescue.
Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland.
Mr. Downing.
Viscount Sandon.
Colonel Wilson-Patten.
Mr. Maguire.
Mr. Russell Gurney.
Mr. Serjeant Sherlock.
Mr. Plunket.
Mr. W. H. Gregory.
Mr. James.
Mr. Pemberton.

The Committee deliberated.—Motion made, and Question put, "That Reporters be admitted during the taking of the Evidence"—(Mr. *Maguire*).—The Committee divided:

Ayes, 3.
Mr. Downing.
Mr. Maguire.
Mr. Serjeant Sherlock.

Noes, 13.
Mr. Disraeli.
Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland.
Mr. Hardy.
Sir George Grey.
Colonel Wilson-Patten.
Viscount Sandon.
Mr. James.
Mr. Pemberton.
Mr. Russell Gurney.
Mr. W. H. Gregory.
Mr. Bruen.
Mr. Chichester Fortescue.
Mr. Plunket.

Captain *Talbot* examined.

[Adjourned till Wednesday next, at Twelve o'clock.

Wednesday, 22nd March 1871.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Marquis of HARTINGTON in the Chair.

Mr. Disraeli.	Mr. James.
Sir George Grey.	Mr. Downing.
Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland.	Viscount Sandon.
Mr. Hardy.	Mr. Russell Gurney.
Mr. Bruen.	Mr. Plunket.
Colonel Wilson-Patten.	Mr. W. H. Gregory.
Mr. Maguire.	Mr. Chichester Fortescue.
Mr. Serjeant Sherlock.	Mr. Pemberton.

The Committee deliberated.

Captain *George Talbot* further examined.

Mr. *Morris Reade* and Captain *William Fitzjames Barry* were severally examined.

[Adjourned till To-morrow, at Twelve o'clock.

Tuesday, 23rd March 1871.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Marquis of HARTINGTON in the Chair.

Sir George Grey.	Colonel Wilson-Patten.
Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland.	Mr. James.
Mr. Hardy.	Viscount Sandon.
Mr. Plunket.	Mr. Disraeli.
Mr. Russell Gurney.	Mr. Chichester Fortescue.
Mr. Serjeant Sherlock.	Mr. Pemberton.
Mr. Bruen.	Mr. W. H. Gregory.
Mr. Downing.	Mr. Maguire.

Mr. *Ralph Smith Cusack* and Mr. *J. A. Rochfort-Boyd* were severally examined.

The Committee deliberated.

Rev. *J. Crofton* examined.

[Adjourned till To-morrow, at Twelve o'clock.

Friday, 24th March 1871.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Marquis of HARTINGTON in the Chair.

Sir George Grey.	Mr. Serjeant Sherlock.
Mr. Disraeli.	Mr. Russell Gurney.
Mr. Hardy.	Mr. Plunket.
Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland.	Viscount Sandon.
Colonel Wilson-Patten.	Mr. James.
Mr. Bruen.	Mr. Maguire.
Mr. Downing.	Mr. Gregory.
Mr. Chichester Fortescue.	Mr. Pemberton.

Mr. *William Mooney* and Mr. *Stephen Seed* were severally examined.

[Adjourned till Monday next, at Twelve o'clock.

Monday, 27th April 1871.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Marquis of HARTINGTON in the Chair.

Sir George Grey.	Mr. Bruen.
Mr. Disraeli.	Vicount Sandon.
Colonel Wilson-Patten.	Mr. Plunket.
Mr. Hardy.	Mr. Chichester Fortescue.
Mr. Russell Gurney.	Mr. Pemberton.
Mr. Downing.	Mr. W. H. Gregory.
Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland.	Mr. James.
Mr. Serjeant Sherlock.	Mr. Maguire.

Mr. *Robert Julian* and the Right Rev. Dr. *Nulty* were severally examined.

[Adjourned till Thursday next, at Twelve o'clock.

Thursday, 30th March 1871.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Marquis of HARTINGTON in the Chair.

Mr. Disraeli.	Mr. Chichester Fortescue.
Sir George Grey.	Colonel Wilson-Patten.
Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland.	Mr. Maguire.
Mr. Hardy.	Mr. James.
Mr. Downing.	Mr. Serjeant Sherlock.
Mr. Plunket.	Mr. Pemberton.
Vicount Sandon.	Mr. Gregory.
Mr. Russell Gurney.	

Mr. *J. H. L. Rogers* examined.

Mr. *J. A. Rochfort-Boyd*, further examined.

Mr. *N. L. Townsend*, Sir *John Wood*, and Colonel *French*, a Member of the House, were severally examined.

[Adjourned till To-morrow, at One o'clock.

Friday, 31st March 1871.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Marquis of HARTINGTON in the Chair.

Sir George Grey.	Viscount Sandon.
Mr. Downing.	Mr. Pemberton.
Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland.	Mr. Chichester Fortescue.
Mr. Bruen.	Mr Serjeant Sherlock.
Mr. Disraeli.	Mr. W. H. Gregory.
Mr. Russell Gurney.	Colonel Wilson-Patten.
Mr. Plunket.	Mr. James.
Mr. Hardy.	Mr. Maguire.

DRAFT REPORT proposed by the Chairman, read the first time, as follows:—

"1. That there is at present existing within the county of Westmeath and certain adjoining portions of the county of Meath and of the King's County, an unlawful combination and confederacy of a secret nature, generally known by the name of the Ribbon Society.

"2. That this Ribbon Society has existed for a considerable length of time, and has lately, as compared with the few preceding years, increased in power and influence.

"3. That owing to the prevalence of this Society, murder and other crimes of the most serious nature have been lately perpetrated within these districts, and that by reason of the sympathy of many persons residing therein with the perpetrators of such crimes, and the terror created by the existence and action of the Society, it has been found to be almost impossible to bring offenders to justice, or when brought to justice, to ensure their being convicted.

"4. That such immunity from detection and consequent punishment has had for its result an encouragement to crime, the diffusion of a spirit of lawlessness, and a corresponding decrease of confidence in the power of the law among the peaceful members of the community.

"5. That this Society, originating in a desire on the part of its members to interfere in an unlawful and violent manner in matters relating to the tenure and occupation of land, has now extended the sphere of its operations, and more or less prejudicially affects other relations of life.

"6. That this Society has numerous adherents and supporters among the farming classes throughout these districts, and has some sympathisers amongst a certain class of small traders in the towns, and recruits its ranks chiefly from the farm servants and daily labourers; that these persons are under the control of others in a better position than themselves, who may be looked upon as the heads of the Ribbon Society.

"7. That the effect of the Ribbon Society is to lead directly to the perpetration of the crimes already mentioned, and indirectly to infuse a feeling of terror throughout all classes in these districts, by reason of which the objects of the Society are frequently brought about, without any overt act of violence.

"8. That the Peace Preservation Act, while largely extending the means previously existing for the prevention and detection of crime, and containing for that purpose several effective and useful provisions, has not furnished the Executive with all the power necessary to deal with crime of that organised and secret nature which characterises the districts in question.

"9. That the Authorities have carried into effect the existing law, including the Peace Preservation Act, vigorously; but, owing to the causes referred to, in a large number of instances they have been unable to arrest and make amenable to justice either the perpetrators of the crimes or the movers and organisers of the Ribbon Society."

Draft Report proposed by the Chairman, read a second time, paragraph by paragraph.

Paragraph 1, *agreed to.*

Paragraphs 2—5, amended, and *agreed to.*

Paragraph 6.—Amendment made.—Amendment proposed (lines 1, 2), to leave out the words, "among the farming classes"—(Mr. *Downing*).—Question put, That those words stand part of the paragraph.—The Committee divided:

Ayes, 13.	Noes, 3.
Mr. Disraeli.	Mr. Downing.
Mr. Solicitor General for Ireland.	Mr. Maguire.
Mr. Hardy.	Mr. Serjeant Sherlock.
Sir George Grey.	
Colonel Wilson-Patten.	
Viscount Sandon.	
Mr. James.	
Mr. Pemberton.	
Mr. Russell Gurney.	
Mr. W. H. Gregory.	
Mr. Bruen.	
Mr. Chichester Fortescue.	
Mr. Plunket.	

Further Amendments made.—Paragraph, as amended, *agreed to.*

Paragraphs 7—9, amended, and *agreed to.*

Question, That this Report, as amended, be the Report of the Committee to the House—put, and *agreed to.*

Ordered, To Report, together with the Minutes of Evidence and an Appendix.

EXPENSES OF WITNESSES.

NAME of WITNESS.	PROFESSION or CONDITION.	From whence Summoned.	Number of Days Absent from Home, under Orders of Committee.	Expenses of Journey to London and Back.	Allowance during absence from Home.	TOTAL Expenses allowed to Witness.
				£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.
Cusack, Ralph Smith -	Chairman of Railway Company.	Dublin -	4	5 10 -	4 4 -	9 14 -
Crofton, Rev. James -	Rector - - -	Dunleer, Co. Louth.	4	6 6 -	4 4 -	10 10 -
Mooney, William -	Solicitor - - -	Mullingar -	4	6 10 -	8 8 -	14 18 -
Seed, Stephen - -	Solicitor - - -	Dublin -	4	5 10 -	8 8 -	13 18 -
Julian, John - -	Solicitor - - -	Dublin -	6	5 10 -	12 12 -	18 2 -
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MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

Monday, 20th March 1871.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. Bruen.
Mr. Disraeli.
Mr. Downing.
Mr. Chichester Fortescue.
Mr. W. H. Gregory.
Sir George Grey.
Mr. Russell Gurney.
Mr. Hardy.
The Marquis of Hartington.
Mr. James.
Mr. Maguire.
Colonel Wilson Patten.
Mr. Pemberton.
Mr. Plunket.
Viscount Sandon.
Mr. Serjeant Sherlock.
The Solicitor General for Ireland.

THE MARQUIS OF HARTINGTON, IN THE CHAIR.

Captain GEORGE TALBOT, called in; and Examined.

Captain *G. Talbot.*

20 March 1871.

1. *Chairman.*] WILL you inform the Committee how long you have been a resident magistrate?—About 18 years.

2. In what counties have you served?—First in Mayo, next in Galway, and subsequently in Westmeath.

3. How long did you serve in Westmeath?—I was there seven years and nine months; speaking shortly, eight years. I am no longer there now.

4. When did you leave Westmeath?—I left Westmeath in October last.

5. Did you find any great difference in the state of society in Westmeath from that in other parts of Ireland with which you were acquainted before?—A very great difference.

6. Will you explain to the Committee in what particular?—In Mayo the usual crimes, such as assaults and a few larcenies, and crimes of that petty nature, occurred, and the same in Galway; but in Westmeath I found quite a different state of things.

7. In what respect; will you further explain the difference?—In Westmeath I found a great deal of agrarian crime; I found a good many threatening letters, which was the first time I had had any experience of them. I found very great reluctance in giving evidence; there was very great fear upon the part of all those who were summoned either to give evidence or to prosecute.

8. Did you find a reluctance to prosecute?—I could hardly get anybody to prosecute in the case of a crime of an aggravated nature.

9. You say that you found not only a reluctance to prosecute, but a difficulty in obtaining evidence?—A very great difficulty; in fact, no one would give me any information.

10. What appeared to be the cause of that?—A fear of the results, such as their houses being visited, or themselves being beaten, as I have known them to have been.

11. Should you say that fear rather than simple unwillingness or sympathy with the accused was the feeling which caused that reluctance?—I think both. There seems to be a natural objection to being called an "informer," no matter how trivial the case.

12. Does your answer refer to the difficulty of getting evidence in all sorts of cases, or only in a particular class of cases?—In every case except larceny.

13. There you could obtain evidence?—There I could obtain evidence.

14. But in every other case there was a difficulty?—In every other case there was extreme reluctance to be brought forward or to be mixed up in the case at all, or even to having their names mentioned.

15. What was the first case of murder that you had to deal with?—The first case was that of a carpenter named Connor.

16. Were there any peculiar features in that case?—There were. He had had some dispute with a herd in the neighbourhood, and he was brutally murdered. I think there were six or seven men present at the murder; his brains were beaten out on the roadside with a stick.

17. Do you remember in what year this was?

Captain *G. Talbot.*

20 March 1871.

—I think it was in the summer of the year 1864, as well as I can remember.

18. Did anything make you attribute this murder to the working of the "Ribbon Society"?—Yes; the parties who were arrested were remanded by the local magistrates (assisted by myself) several times, but we could get no evidence whatsoever, except private information through some of the gentry and magistrates, and they were not at liberty to use the names of the parties who informed them. They would not be brought forward, and their passages were, I understand, subsequently paid to America, or at all events they left the country a very short time afterwards.

19. Mr. *Hardy.*] Do you allude to the persons who gave the information?—No; to the persons who were arrested.

20. *Chairman.*] Did anything occur shortly after this which made you acquainted with persons whom you supposed to be connected with this society?—Yes; from inquiries and by trying to ascertain the parties who were at the head of this conspiracy, I did inform myself of some persons who I thought were the leading parties in the matter.

21. In hearing cases of agrarian character, have you observed any indications of the working of this society?—I could always tell before I entered the court-house the nature of the case I had to try, by seeing the same parties at every petty sessions, whenever there was a crime of that particular nature to be tried.

22. Mr. *Bruen.*] Do you mean in different parts of the county?—Yes, through the whole of the district.

23. *Chairman.*] You saw certain parties in court?—I saw certain parties in court watching the case, and exhibiting always an interest in it.

24. As spectators?—Yes.

25. And what is your impression as to the object for which they came there?—I could have but one impression, namely, that they had some private business there, and were interested in the case; and I eventually observed that wherever this occurred they were more or less interested; they were deeply interested in every case.

26. Of what class of persons were these?—They were not large farmers; there were only two or three large farmers I should say that is to say, middle class farmers. The remainder were generally small holders.

27. But they were above the labouring class?—They were decidedly above the labouring class.

28. You observed that these particular individuals were present at the hearing of agrarian cases at first; did you observe that continue during the whole of the time that you were in Westmeath?—Invariably the whole time.

29. You believe that they attend there to watch the cases?—I believe so; it is my impression that they are there to watch the cases.

30. On behalf of members of their society?—Yes, on behalf of their interests.

31. When you say they are there to watch their interests, what do you conceive their interests to be?—I have made myself acquainted with the fact that there exists an unlawful conspiracy society, of which I believe those parties to be members.

32. What was the next murder which came under your notice?—The next murder was that of a man of the name of Walsh.

33. In what year was that?—I think it was in the spring of 1864. He was sowing his corn at the time he was murdered.

34. You say that Connor's murder was in 1863?—I think it was in 1863. It is a very long time ago. I cannot be quite sure of the date.

35. Was the murder of Walsh of an agrarian character?—Certainly; I think so.

36. What was supposed to be the object of that?—From the inquiries I made I understood that two men of the name of Cooney were the outgoing tenants of a farm, and Walsh's father had purchased an interest in the farm; he had paid a sum of money, I think, amounting to 20*l.*; I will not be quite certain of the amount, and Cooney expected to have got the whole sum, whereas some portion of the sum was retained on account of arrears of rent. Walsh was then ordered to quit the farm, which he did not do.

37. By whom was he ordered to quit?—By the Cooneys, as well as I remember. He got a threatening letter, ordering him to evacuate the farm.

38. Was he ordered to do so directly by the Cooneys?—As well as I can recollect an armed party went to the house, and he also received a threatening letter.

39. Neither the armed party nor the threatening letter would come ostensibly from the Cooneys?—I presume I could not say that, but the subsequent proceedings proved that evidently they did come from the Cooneys.

40. What steps were taken in this case?—Some three or four of those parties were arrested for the crime, and one of the parties who was at the shooting of Walsh, and who was arrested, turned informer. Subsequently a second member of the party arrested turned informer, so that we had two informers then, and they were both, I think, at Ballybough, the Government depôt at Dublin for Crown witnesses. As it came near the assizes this last approver absconded, and there was then but one approver; and as we could not corroborate his evidence in any other way, the case did not go for trial.

41. The victim did not die at once, I believe?—He died a week afterwards.

42. Did he identify the parties?—No; we confronted the prisoners, mixed with others, with the victim, and he refused to identify the party.

43. Had you reason to think that he was unable to identify him?—I am quite sure that he knew him.

44. What made you think that?—From his being in close proximity to him in the neighbourhood, and from information that we had received that he did know him.

45. Under what circumstances did the approver abscond; how did that take place?—I can only say from hearsay; but I believe that influence was brought to bear upon him by the Cooneys, and he was made away with.

46. Was he not in gaol?—No, he was not; he was a Crown witness. Crown witnesses are at large; they only receive their support from the Government, they are at perfect liberty to move about.

47. Sir *G. Grey.*] This approver had been in charge, had he not?—Yes; but his evidence had been taken, and he was at large.

48. *Chairman.*

48. *Chairman.*] Was there not any power of keeping him in custody?—Not that I am aware of, as the Government had accepted his sworn information; he was not charged with murder, he was only charged with conspiracy as being one of the party.

49. The prisoner was acquitted, I believe?—He was discharged by the judge, as the Crown were not able to go to trial.

50. In the investigation of this case, did you see any traces of a "Ribbon Society"?—Yes, certainly; these men were brought from a neighbouring county; they were entertained in Cooney's house during the night with whiskey and provisions: the arms had been hidden in a straw-stack outside the house, and they were guided across the bog, to where the outrage took place, by the Cooneys, in two parties, so as not to attract the attention of the police. They reached the farm about one o'clock in the daytime, whilst the man was sowing his corn; they put him on his knees, and shot at him; but one of the parties said, "Do not kill him, but only shoot him in the legs, so as to disable him;" and it was of those wounds that he subsequently died.

51. Where did you get this information?—From one of the approvers, as well as I can recollect; I should say that what made this man turn approver was that he was tracked; there was a clever constable who had got the track of his shoe, and by some peculiar arrangement of the nails in it, he tracked him all the way, or most of the way into the field, which was a newly ploughed and harrowed field, and into one ditch in particular; and when this witness found that he was so pushed to it, and found out in this way; he offered to give his whole evidence, which he did.

52. Was that the approver who afterwards absconded?—No, it was not that one who absconded; it was the one who subsequently gave his evidence who absconded.

53. Was the evidence which you obtained from this man upon oath?—I cannot speak at this distance of time with reference to that; my habit, in a case of that sort, is not to swear an informer, but to take his statements first, to see if they are of any value, and then to swear him, after consideration, if I were allowed to do so upon consultation; if he had been a principal party I never would have taken his statement, but being only charged with being one of a party, I most likely submitted the question to Government for advice.

54. Did he give his evidence upon the investigation before the magistrate?—I cannot say where he gave the evidence, it being such a long time ago.

55. He gave his evidence before you?—He gave it before me, but I cannot say where at this distance of time; I know that all my brother magistrates in the locality were acquainted with the nature of his evidence.

56. Mr. *Hardy.*] You do not know whether he was committed upon that evidence, or whether he was committed subsequently to that evidence?—The approver gave his evidence after the prisoners were committed, because he was one of them.

57. Sir *G. Grey.*] Upon what evidence were those prisoners committed for trial?—The event occurred eight years ago, and I cannot exactly recollect, but the usual course is this: very often a constable who has received information may come and state, that from information which he has received, he believes that such and such parties were implicated in such a murder, and very often in such a case I issue a warrant to arrest and bring the parties before us.

58. The *Solicitor General for Ireland.*] I think you have not observed the distinction between "committed" and "remanded"?—The prisoners in question were remanded and not committed for trial until after several investigations, and after the approvers' evidence had been taken he was committed for trial.

59. *Chairman.*] What was the next serious Ribbon case in which you had to act; I believe there was a case in 1865; there was an attack upon Mr. Gavan's house, was there not?—That is in the same neighbourhood; there was an attack made upon some farmers of the name of Gavan.

60. What occurred in that case?—The Gavans were two brothers who were very large farmers. I should think they held something like 300 or 400 acres, and they were tenants of Mr. Balfour. One of them died, and there was considerable jealousy between the wife of the man who died and her brother-in-law. The Gavan who died made a will in favour of one of his nephews, and the relatives of the widow felt very great jealousy of this will which was made; Mr. Gavan's house was visited, and he was told to have nothing to say to the lands of Castletost, which were the lands that were to be given up to him by the sheriff on the 1st of November, the outrage occurring upon the 30th of October. The house was visited by an armed party who fired several shots, and although the sons, two able-bodied men, who were licensed for arms, and had arms, were inside, they made no resistance.

61. Was anybody injured?—Nobody was injured; they only shot in the air just to give notice as it were.

62. Were the orders you refer to given upon this same occasion?—The orders were given upon the same occasion to have nothing to say to the lands of Castletost. I examined the servant boy who lived in the house, who I understood had an opportunity of seeing the parties through his windows, it being a moonlight night, and believing, as I did, the parties who were present to have been neighbours of theirs, I was satisfied from the demeanour of the witness whom I was examining that he knew them perfectly well, but he refused absolutely to tell me about them, and denied all knowledge of them. Mr. Gavan himself said he did not see them.

63. Mr. *Pemberton.*] Was there any attempt at disguise?—No, I think not, but it was bright moonlight, and from the position the boy described himself to have occupied, looking out of the window, he must have seen them.

64. *Chairman.*] Did any outrage follow these threats?—I cannot say how long afterwards, but a short time afterwards, as young John Gavan and his mother and another, I think, were going to mass, just as they turned out of the gate, which was a common iron farm gate, they were fired at while the car was slowly taking a turn and he was opening the gate. The ball must have passed within a few inches of their heads, because I observed a place like a rabbit hole or a hare path in the hedgeway and the branch of an oak tree was cut, and taking a direct line from the

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the branch of the tree the ball must have passed just close by their heads.

65. They had disregarded the warning?—Yes, they held the land.

66. Were any particulars of this outrage discovered?—Not beyond this. We found a soda-water bottle. One bottle is generally so very like another that one would say it would be difficult to identify it, but this one appeared to have a dinge in it, and we ascertained that a soda-water bottle with a pint of whisky in it had been sold by a publican of very bad character in the neighbourhood to parties whom we suspected, and this soda-water bottle that he had sold had had a dinge in it.

67. Did Gavan continue to hold the land?—Gavan continued to hold the land.

68. Was he attacked afterwards?—No, not that I am aware of.

69. Did you take any measures in consequence of this outrage?—Yes; I recommended that extra police should be placed upon the townland and taxed upon it; they remained there for some time. I cannot say how long, I think it was six months, and I was repeatedly applied to by the people to try to get them away. I said that as soon as the lands were settled, and there was no more question about it, that might be a subject that might be my duty to submit to the proper authorities.

70. Were any arrests made in consequence of that outrage?—There were two parties arrested, not for being the actual perpetrators of the firing at the Gavans, but for having conspired in the public-house to get it done.

71. Mr. *Chichester Fortescue.*] I suppose the man who bought the soda-water bottle full of whisky was arrested?—Yes, he was.

72. *Chairman.*] Were those persons committed for trial?—No; we could not identify the bottle; the soda-water bottle was not considered sufficient evidence, and that was the only clue we had to it, except the remains of a little whisky in the bottom of it, but we could not say that it was actually his whisky.

73. Upon whom were those extra police charged?—They were charged upon the town lands immediately situated round the locality of the crime.

74. Mr. *Maguire.*] Had the Gavans to pay any of the tax?—The Gavans, I think, were exempt, they being the parties injured.

75. Mr. *Chichester Fortescue.*] That is the usual course, is it not, to exempt the parties injured?—Yes, that is the usual course.

76. *Chairman.*] Were any special orders given to the police in consequence of that?—Yes, that they were to be more active; to patrol constantly, and to make some concentrated patrol, so as to meet at certain spots, and to patrol every road.

77. In what way has that system of patrolling worked?—Latterly, up to the time of Mr. Anketell's murder, the usual course was for each parish to patrol as often as the men could afford to go out. They have a great many duties; they are out every night and every morning; they are generally out at those times, according to circumstances, when they think that it is most likely they will meet any parties moving about.

78. What do you call "concentrated patrol"?—What I mean by "concentrated patrol" is this: that after the time when the Castle Pollard district was so disturbed by armed parties going about, I requested the Government to afford me cars for the more speedy proceeding of the police to a particular place. I requested the county inspector to send 20, or 30, or 40 men on cars from Mullingar to the Castle Pollard district, so that they went forth in small parties through every road after a certain hour at night; and in that way every road was patrolled at night, meeting at a central point by agreement.

79. Mr. *Chichester Fortescue.*] When was that system introduced?—I think it was introduced about two years ago, or a year and a-half before I left the district.

80. In the year 1869?—Yes.

81. *Chairman.*] Do you think that that system of patrolling has been of any use?—I think it did good so far as this, that the people saw that the police passed their houses on every road on the same night; and I think they must have communicated to each other that every road was patrolled.

82. Mr. *Russell Gurney.*] Not at the same time?—No, certainly not. If we passed down a certain road at nine o'clock on Monday night, we would not do it until, say, four in the morning on Wednesday or Thursday.

83. *Chairman.*] What other steps did you take in the matter at that time with respect to arms?—The county being proclaimed, I refused licenses for arms to anybody except to those of unexceptionable character, and who were recommended, not only by a magistrate, but by the constabulary also.

84. Did you have any searches made for arms?—Constant searches were made for arms, but at that time those searches were very much hampered, as the warrant was only good, I think, for 21 days, and it was to be in the hands of the sub-inspector; but that has been altered by the late Act, and a warrant now is good for a much longer period, and need not be in the hands of a sub-inspector. There was also a general simultaneous search made throughout every district in the whole county, by direction of his Excellency.

85. Have any of those searches had any result?—They had one very important result, namely, the discovery (they were almost the only arms found, with the exception of a few old barrels) of the arms which were found in the house of a man named Burne, close to Mullingar; they there found two loaded pistols and a canister of powder, and some bullets, hidden in the upper part of the house, and one of those Burne's was arrested for being one of the parties who murdered Mr. Anketell.

86. The attempt on Mr. Hornidge took place in 1866, did it not?—Yes, on the 24th of June 1866; that was on a Sunday.

87. Were any persons arrested for that attempt?—Yes, five altogether, but four only were retained in custody.

88. Were you able to obtain any evidence in that case?—No direct evidence; a good deal of circumstantial evidence.

89. Have you reason to think that anybody could have given you evidence?—I am quite sure they could. A woman, who must have known the parties, and who gave them a drink of water as they went away, not a quarter of a mile from the scene, refused positively to give us any evidence.

90. Did she refuse to give evidence at all?—She denied knowing them at all; she said she saw two men, but did not know them; I think,

at

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at first, she refused to give any evidence. In this case there was a very curious piece of circumstantial evidence with respect to the wadding of the gun that was picked up. It was put together by Mr. Reed, who was with me then, and it turned out, when put on paper and neatly fitted, to be a portion of the pattern of the sleeve of a woman's jacket. The prisoner had slept the night before in a house in the King's County, where, in a drawer of a table, was found the remainder of the pattern which had evidently been torn off, and the tear exactly fitted to the end of the wad; the gun had been loaded evidently from that pattern.

91. Was anybody committed for trial in that case?—No; they were committed for further examination, but not committed for trial.

92. Without going through the various cases which occurred between that time and last winter, murders, and attempts to murder, took place in almost every year, did they not, in the county of Westmeath?—In every year; generally the summer months are free from crime to a great extent.

93. But matters got worse, I think, in the winter of 1869-70?—They did in 1868, 1869, and 1870. Mr. Fetherston Haugh's case occurred, I think, in April 1868, at the time of the Cattle Show; he was murdered.

94. Will you state what that case was?—Mr. Fetherston Haugh had had some disputes with his tenants; he had given them notice that he would raise the rent upon some of the tenants in a townland named Ballyhaugh, and there was a millowner there who held a mill at a very reduced rent. Mr. Fetherston Haugh considered that the mill was worth something like 40 *l.* a year more, and he noticed the tenant that he would require that rent from him. The party most interested in the mill was a young man, a relation by marriage of the tenant, and he it was who went with three others to pay the rent to Mr. Fetherston Haugh, who I should say used to receive his own rents. These parties went to the office, and they tendered him the old rent, and he refused to take it; they put the rent in their pocket, and they returned all three in a car. They did not go to their own house, but they went to a public-house, where they drank. They were traced there, and then they were traced to another public-house. There they deliberated with closed doors, and returned after nightfall to their own house. The following day but one Mr. Fetherston Haugh went to Dublin, and he came home by the mail train. His coachman met him with a dog cart, and as they rode up the hill about a mile and a half from Killuean, and about six from his residence, the mare used generally to go with rather a rush at the hill at first, and then walk towards the top of it; and as his mare broke into a walk a man came close behind him on his left side, fired at him, and hit him on the shoulder, and the bullet entered his body; it must have been very close, as his coat was singed by the flash. This occurred within about a hundred yards of a house. His servant got out of the dog cart, and went to the house; there was a light in the house, but they refused at first to open the door. At last a woman came out, and subsequently the son came out and refused to give the coachman any assistance whatever, and denied all hearing of the shot or anything else. The coachman had to drive on to another house. His master was lying across the dog cart, and he thought that he might still be alive. He went to another house and was still refused admittance, and I believe he called subsequently at a third house, and being still refused he drove home to the residence into the yard, when he found that his master was dead.

95. He could get no assistance till he got home?—He could get no assistance till he got home. I observed in that case the most extreme reluctance upon the part of all to give any evidence or show the slightest sympathy.

96. Was there anybody whom you have reason to suppose was in a position to give evidence?—I am perfectly certain that the whole neighbourhood were perfectly well aware of the occurrence, not only the parties immediately concerned, but others, knew that he was to have been shot.

97. Were any persons arrested?—There were two arrested.

98. Why were you certain that the whole neighbourhood were aware of it?—I was certain the whole neighbourhood were aware of it from the demeanour of the people, and from information I received from detectives and from police.

99. Mr. *Chichester Fortescue.*] Conversations were repeated to you at the time?—Conversations were repeated to me, and it was a well known thing that Mr. Fetherston Haugh was shot, and the usual answer to questions about it in the county say "served him right."

100. Was that answer given to you?—Never to me, but that was what I understood from the police and from the detectives I had down, that that was "the price of him," "that was his value." It meant that that was the reward he ought to get.

101. Did you examine many persons yourself whom you thought likely to give evidence?—Yes, I did; I had four men committed for further examination under suspicion; the four men whose rent was raised, and whose movements that night could not be accounted for to my satisfaction.

102. Did you suspect any of them of having been the actual assassins?—No, I did not suspect them to be the actual assassins, but they were the men that drove on the car; they were the tenants who had tendered the rent, who had deliberated with closed doors in the public-house. I thought their going by their own house and going from public-house to public-house a very strange thing, and I committed them. I am satisfied also that they were parties to the crime.

103. What was the result of the arrest?—The persons arrested were ultimately discharged for want of evidence.

104. There was no evidence?—There was no evidence. One of the parties was a workman in an iron foundry establishment.

105. In that neighbourhood, or distant from it?—In that neighbourhood; there was some evidence got of two children having seen two men seated upon a wall that night very near the time when Mr. Featherston Haugh was fired at, in the direct line and near the spot.

106. Mr. *Russell Gurney.*] Two of those men who were discharged immediately emigrated, I think?—One of them did, the other was kept in custody.

107. *Chairman.*] How long were those men kept in custody?—I could not be positive as to the length of time, but I am sure they were kept about three weeks or a month before they were

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were discharged. The evidence against one of them was that before his arrest, he said in the workshop the moment he came to work that morning to his fellow workman, "Fetherston was shot last night;" the other said, "What did he say?" and the man then repeated the words which Mr. Fetherston Haugh had made use of, "Oh, my God, I am done for." He said that himself, so it occurred to me that it was a very odd thing that as Mr. Fetherston Haugh was shot between 9 and 10 o'clock at night, a man coming to work the first thing in the morning should know so accurately the words the man shot had made use of.

108. Did you receive much information at that time?—None but that of the two children who saw these two men close to the spot, and the expressions made use of by Mr. Fetherston Haugh as I have described.

109. But you stated, that from detectives and informers you received information?—I received worthless information; the mere gossip of countrymen; no real evidence whatever.

110. Could Mr. Fetherston Haugh's coachman give any evidence?—No, not beyond the detail I have given, which he swore to.

111. Would he have had the opportunity of seeing the man?—No; Mr. Fetherston Haugh was a very big man, and the coachman was a short man, and would have been unable to see the assassin.

112. From information you received, you formed the opinion that the whole country was aware, both before and after, that he was going to be shot?—Yes, that was notorious.

113. Did you feel equally certain that they knew who did it?—I feel morally certain that they knew who did it.

114. The actual assassin?—The actual assassin.

115. In your experience, is that always known in the country?—I am certain it is known.

116. Is it not usual that a stranger is brought to do it?—Yes, it is, but it is known to the parties who bring him; and if it is known to the parties who bring him, it is known to a great many others.

117. What is the object of bringing a stranger generally into the county to commit the crime?—That they may not be identified by parties; to throw some difficulty in the way of detection.

118. That they may not be identified by parties, or by the police?—The police never have a chance of seeing them; they watch the police too well.

119. But so long as they escape identification by the person actually assailed, they are not very anxious to conceal themselves from the country people?—Certainly not; I do not think they take any pains to conceal themselves from the ordinary country people.

120. Was Mr. Anketell's the next serious case?—I think Mr. Anketell's was the next serious case; there were several visitings of houses, and beatings, and so on, but Mr. Anketell's was the next murder, I think, of any importance.

121. Mr. Anketell was the station-master at Mullingar, I think?—He was.

122. Was he shot dead?—No, he had five bullet wounds, I think, but he lived for about three days, as well as I can remember.

123. Could he identify any one?—No, he stated to me that he could not identify the man. He had seen the mail train leave; that was the last train on the line; and he had crossed the line into his own yard, through a wicket, and on the right hand side as he entered, the door being on the left, there was a window with a light in it which threw a light on to the door the minute it was opened. The parties who shot him were at about 10 yards distance. There was a garden and a little wicket gate. There were two steps going up; they stood on the steps in the shade, and as he opened the door the light was thrown directly upon him, and as he was crossing the angle of the yard they fired at him.

124. How did you ascertain those facts which you have mentioned?—We ascertained the place where they stood to shoot at him from the fact that there was a turf-house close to the steps, with a little straw in it, and they had taken the straw out. The police tracked the men first to the garden, it being a wet evening. There were fresh tracks into the garden, and there was some straw taken out of the turf-house and placed upon the steps as if to deaden the sound of any person going up the steps, and subsequently we were confirmed in that view by an informer, who swore that the two men stood upon the steps, one upon the upper and one upon the lower.

125. Had Mr. Anketell been threatened before?—Mr. Anketell had been threatened, but he had never made any official complaint of it.

126. What had he been threatened with?—I cannot say; he never reported it to me; it never came before me officially that he had been threatened, but I believe from inquiries that he had said to several people that he would meet with some accident some day.

127. Mr. *Chichester Fortescue.*] Why was that?—He did not say.

128. *Chairman.*] What did you believe to have been the reason?—I believe the reasons were many. He was a very strict, honest, conscientious man. He had discharged a good many of the railway servants, and on that day he had deprived a smith of his garden, and the garden had been thrown into his own. That was alleged to be one reason. The other reasons were that there was a dispute between some of the servants on account of a ticket taker having orange lillies in his office, and he had been told by Mr. Anketell that he would report him, but he did not do so. Others said it was on account (and I believe this to have been the real cause) of the facilities which he afforded the police of having access to the stores at all times, which deprived the Fenians and the Ribbonmen of facilities for landing their arms which were being landed at that time, and deprived them of facilities which they used to have of having arms and other materials conveyed by railway to Mullingar.

129. There was nothing agrarian about the case except perhaps the garden?—I should be sorry to say that the garden had not something to do with it; I should think it had, but it was a combination of everything.

130. Was Mr. Anketell an unpopular man?—He was very unpopular amongst the railway people.

131. Did the police know that his life was in any danger?—No, certainly not.

132. He had never told the police that he had been threatened?—Not that I am aware of; he never even asked me for arms, that I am aware of.

133. Did

133. Did you get any information about this case?—We got a great deal of information about it.

134. Were any arrests made?—There were two arrests made; the circumstantial evidence was very strong indeed against the parties.

135. What evidence had you against them?—We had evidence from one woman who lived in the house where one of the prisoners lived, and she made a long statement as to the conversations between him and his wife, which she overheard through a chink in the floor, in which he acknowledged himself as having been the man who shot Mr. Anketell. This man has since been charged with another shooting, but he has been discharged. When I say that we get informamation, I wish to be understood to say that we do not get information that we can use, but every information I get is "on condition that my name is not used," or "that I am in no way brought forward."

136. Mr. *Downing.*] And that is not on oath?—That is not on oath; and if that promise was not given we should receive no information whatever.

137. *Chairman.*] Did you say that you got information sufficient to commit those men for trial?—No; the Attorney General was very reluctant to postpone the trial for one assizes, and he was extremely reluctant to discharge them, even at the last, but we could get no more evidence.

138. You kept them in custody for some time?—They were close upon a year in custody.

139. Mr. Serjeant *Sherlock.*] Is Murray still in the country?—Murray is still in the country, and so is Byrnes.

140. Was the Peace Preservation Act passed shortly after this?—The Peace Preservation Act was passed in April 1870; this was in 1869.

141. *Chairman.*] During the time you have known the County Westmeath, have there been any cases of homicides or serious outrage in which there has been a conviction?—No, I do not know any case of homicide, or of serious outrage, in which there has been any conviction; there has been a conviction in a case of threatening letters, which is the only serious case I know in which a conviction took place.

142. Have any of those cases gone before a jury?—Yes, there was one that went before a jury, a very serious case.

143. What case was that?—The case of visiting Cassidy's house with an armed party.

144. Will you give the Committee the particulars of that case?—Two brothers had a dispute about land, and the house of one of them was visited; a pistol was presented at the door, and shots were fired, and he was asked to come out, and he was warned to give up a certain portion of land that his brother claimed. It was a dispute about a fence between them, and the man in question was brought from a distance from Westmeath and put upon his trial, and the trial occupied a day and a-half, I think, before the Lord Chief Baron. He was acquitted, and he was received with an ovation by the people outside; that happened the very night that Mr. Anketell was shot.

145. Where was this man tried for the murder of Mr. Anketell?—At Mullingar; at the assizes.

146. You obtained sufficient evidence in that case to put him on his trial?—We obtained his identification by the woman, which was the only identification I know of; that was by the man's sister.

147. She came forward to identify him?—Yes; after a great deal of pressure, and a great deal of persuasion, she identified him, and she kept up to her identification. At first she pointedly identified him; she was anxious that her brother should be vindicated.

148. Mr. *Downing.*] What was the name of the party tried?—Freele was the name of the party tried; there was a great dispute about the cap he wore; I think he was acquitted upon that account. I ascertained afterwards that he had turned his cap inside out.

149. *Chairman.*] Were you able to obtain much other evidence upon that case?—It was a perfectly clear case, as I thought.

150. What other evidence were you able to obtain in that case?—We traced him to the town, and we traced him close to the place, and we had a person able positively to identify him.

151. Was the evidence entirely police evidence, or other evidence?—It was the evidence of the girl who met him at the house.

152. But except that, and the evidence of the police, did you have any other evidence?—Except her evidence, and the evidence of the police, we had none. If I am not mistaken, the man boasted after he was acquitted that he was the party.

153. Is that the only case which you can recollect that has been brought before a jury?—That is all I can recollect within my time of ever having been able to go for trial.

154. You have obtained a conviction for writing a threatening letter, have you not?—Yes.

155. Frequently?—One conviction.

156. One conviction only?—One conviction only.

157. During all this time you have been speaking of, besides these serious outrages, minor outrages have been very frequent, have they not?—They have been constant in one season of the year, that is from October to March and April.

158. And of what description are those outrages?—Visiting houses, writing threatening letters and intimidation with regard to land?—It often happens that if a herd is discharged, you are ordered not to discharge that herd or to take another.

159. And the new herd himself is frequently threatened, is he not?—Constantly; he is ordered to leave. Mr. Fetherston Haugh's steward was fired at several times. Mr. Fetherston Haugh's work bill used to be 40*l.* a week, and now he told me the other day that it was only 3*l.*, he had discharged all his labourers in consequence of these outrages, and that he had only three or four men.

160. Sir *G. Grey.*] Is that the son of the man who was shot?—That is the cousin of the man who was shot; he was a man of about 5,000*l.* a year, a very large proprietor, and he had built houses for all his labourers.

161. *Chairman.*] Have you any reason to suppose that the whole of these visits by armed parties, writing threatening letters, and other outrages, are reported to the police?—I am certain that all the visiting of houses by armed parties are reported to the police, but I am quite sure that not all the threatening letters, or perhaps

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haps not more than one-third, are reported to the police.

162. You think that the visits by armed parties are reported to the police?—Yes, I should say so, certainly.

163. Do you think that the aggrieved person comes forward in all cases?—No, but it has come to the notice of the police through others, and the police go to visit the parties, and they must admit upon questioning that they were visited but they cannot identify the people; that is invariably the course the thing takes.

164. What was the effect of the passing of the Peace Preservation Bill; did you observe that it had any effect?—I think the effect immediately for some months after the passing of the Act was a very good one. It happened just at the time of year certainly when crime generally ceases, that is about April, but it was reported to me by the police that nobody was out at night, that nobody was to be found on the roads after sunset.

165. Did you hear of any of the worst characters leaving the district?—I heard of a good many of the bad characters having left the district in anticipation of legislation; they thought that a very severe measure was going to be passed, and some of the lower orders left entirely.

166. Did they leave the district before the Act was passed, or afterwards?—I am not speaking of my own knowledge, but of from what I heard. The police said that they had left the neighbourhood.

167. What time was that?—Just previous to the passing of the Act.

168. Are you aware whether they have returned?—I am not aware of it. I think they went to America, and certainly the probability is that they did not return.

169. When did you leave the county?—In October last.

170. Had crime broken out before you left?—Yes, it was just beginning when I left.

171. In any very serious case, or only in minor cases?—In such cases as visiting houses.

172. Had that become frequent?—It was just beginning; about two or three cases I think had been reported. Captain Barry succeeded me then.

173. On the passing of the Peace Preservation Act, what steps did you take to carry out its provisions?—I explained to the police what appeared to me to be the most important clause, that is to say, the 23rd, empowering them to arrest parties out one hour after sunset under suspicious circumstances, and the power to arrest strangers in the district.

174. Was your district specially proclaimed?—Yes, it was immediately specially proclaimed.

175. Under the second part of the Peace Preservation Act?—Yes, under part 2 of the Peace Preservation Act.

176. Were many persons brought before you under that section?—I think there were about five, or six, or seven cases brought before me by the notice under the 23rd section.

177. Were you able to convict any of them?—I did in two cases convict them at once, immediately after the passing of the Act.

178. Were they two individual cases?—Yes.

179. But in other cases what steps were taken?—The other cases were more of a trivial character; it was on St. John's night, when it is usual for boys and girls to be out a little on the roads with bonfires, and I did not consider that those were suspicious circumstances, although it was a little after sunset, so I dismissed the cases.

180. The arrest of those five or six persons under this Act does not appear to be a great result?—The arrest of the first two in the Castle Pollard district had in my humble judgment a very good effect; that was immediately after the passing of the Act, as well as I can recollect. In the month of May the proclamation had been issued, and after that the police brought up these two people; they were boys of bad character, and when I swore them they refused to give any account of themselves. The clause empowers me to make them give an account of themselves on oath, but they refused to do so, so I considered that their being men of bad character in Westmeath, and their refusing to account for their movements was sufficient to justify me in giving them one month's imprisonment.

181. Sir *G. Grey.*] The Act giving you power to imprison them for six months?—Yes, but I thought as a beginning it was better to give them only one month. There is a great doubt about the "suspicious circumstances."

182. Mr. *R. Gurney.*] It need not be under suspicious circumstances under the 23rd section for you to apprehend them, is it?—It must be.

183. The section says, "It shall be lawful for any justice of the peace to arrest and bring before him, or cause to be arrested or brought before him, or for any constable, peace officer, or other person to arrest and bring before any justice of the peace any person who, within any district specially proclaimed, and under suspicious circumstances, shall be in the fields, streets, highways, or elsewhere out of his dwelling or place of abode, at any time from one hour after sunset until sunrise, and any such justice may order such person to be brought or appear before the justices of the peace assembled at the next petty sessions for the district in which such person was arrested, and may in the meantime commit such person to gaol or admit him to bail, as to such justice shall seem fit"?—Yes, but previous to that he must have been found out under suspicious circumstances.

184. *Chairman.*] You say that you explained to the police the meaning of this section according to your opinion?—I did.

185. Have you consulted with the constabulary officers upon its operation?—I did at the time. I explained to them that my idea of the section was that in the case of any person of bad character out at night who was not able to state that he was on some lawful and legitimate business, it was their duty to bring him before me.

186. Are you aware that that Act has been extensively put in force in the county of Westmeath?—I am aware that it was acted upon in every district in my part of Westmeath, and I think that the police were very zealous in bringing such cases forward.

187. Are you aware whether many persons have been convicted under this section?—I am not aware of that, beyond my own district I convicted two. I wish to say that the police informed me that, after the passing of the Act, and for two or three months up to the month of July, when I went on leave, the roads were absolutely

absolutely deserted at night, that nobody was out at night.

188. Are you not aware that in very many instances persons brought before the magistrates under this section by the police, have been discharged for want of proof of the "suspicious circumstances"?—I have heard the report, but I am not aware of it as a fact. I believe it to have occurred that some magistrates have discharged them.

189. But in your opinion the fact of a bad character being found out at night, and not being able to account satisfactorily for himself, is sufficient to warrant you to commit him under the Act?—Certainly, when I swear him and he does not satisfy me as to his legitimate business. It is quite in his power to satisfy me when I swear him.

190. Have you found it frequently happen that the worst characters, when they are out upon some unlawful business, are provided with a very good excuse?—Certainly it may be so.

191. Have you had any cases of that kind brought before you?—I cannot say that I have; there was a case that I met with of that description when I was leaving the county, but I left it to be determined by my successor. I am not aware that it was brought forward under the Act, although I advised the police to bring it forward.

192. Have you been able to make any use of the 13th section of the Act, the marginal note of which is, "In proclaimed districts where felony is committed, justices may summon persons suspected of being capable of giving evidence in relation to such offence, and punish persons refusing to give evidence"?—I have never had any occasion to use it.

193. But no very serious case has come before you since the passing of this Act?—No very serious case. It was passed in April 1870, and in the summer of 1870 there was no serious crime I think until the beginning of October last.

194. Sir *G. Grey.*] Then you had left the county, had you not?—Then I had left the county.

195. *Chairman.*] During the time you were in Westmeath, you have made, I believe, extensive inquiries into the nature and origin of this Ribbon Society?—Yes, I inquired, as it was my duty to inquire, into its nature and into its working, as far as I could.

196. What sources of information did you have?—I had it from some informers, who informed me of it.

197. While you have been in Westmeath, has any Ribbon Lodge ever been surprised; have any papers been found?—Yes; I do not wish to say it was a Ribbon Lodge, but there was a meeting certainly discovered while I was in Mullingar. If the Committee wish, I will describe the way in which it occurred.

198. Was there anything found?—Yes, there was.

199. What was found?—A printed paper, purporting to have been an oath, was found in two parts.

200. Perhaps you will be good enough to state to the Committee the circumstances under which that meeting was surprised?—There was a policeman who received some information with reference to the matter, and he went to a house in Mullingar where he was informed there was to be a meeting; he pushed in the door; there was a man in the passage, and he pushed him aside, but this man had previously given some warning, and he entered the room from which a number of men were rushing out by another door; he saw the last man going out; he heard the footsteps of others; one man attempted to put out the gas, upon which he collared him and arrested him, and on the floor, or on the table, I am not sure quite which, he found a paper containing printed matter, torn in two pieces, and this was brought to me; it was an oath, in the strongest language, binding the parties to fraternity and, I think, secrecy, exclusive dealing, and, I think, the murder of some of Her Majesty's subjects.

201. Mr. *Russell Gurney.*] Have you the paper with you?—No, I sent it to the Government with my official reports.

202. *Chairman.*] Was that a public-house?—Yes, it was a public-house; it was partly an hotel and partly a public-house.

203. Mr. *Bruen.*] By whom was the public-house kept?—I do not wish to give the names of the parties unless the Committee particularly desire it.

204. *Chairman.*] When was this?—I think it was in the winter of 1869. I find it was on the 4th of May 1869.

205. You say that one man was arrested?—Yes, and he was subsequently discharged.

206. Was he not committed for trial?—No.

207. Was he brought before you, or before any other magistrate?—He was brought before me. I took the opinion of the Government upon the subject, and it ended by there not being sufficient evidence to commit him.

208. What was he charged with?—With being in the room where this illegal oath was found, but there was great difficulty with reference to the way in which the case should be proceeded with; there was very little evidence beyond the finding of the oath upon the table.

209. But there was no doubt about that?—There was no doubt about that.

210. There was no doubt that he was in the room, and that the paper was illegal?—There is no doubt that he was in the room, and that this illegal paper was found upon the table.

211. It was considered that no conviction could be obtained?—It was considered that there was not sufficient to sustain a case.

212. You spoke with some doubt as to whether this was a Ribbon meeting?—I think there is very great doubt whether that was a Ribbon meeting; I would rather think it was a Fenian Ribbon meeting, if I may so call it; I think that the Fenians in Mullingar and in Westmeath, generally, when they first came there, associated more with the Ribbonmen; they found it a ready field to work upon, an organisation already to their hand, and I think a number of Ribbonmen about the neighbourhood became Fenians as well; I think this meeting was a mixture of the two; it is not certainly the usual Ribbon oath, as I am informed.

213. Is this the only case which you have known of a Ribbon meeting, or a possible Ribbon meeting, being surprised?—This is the only case I know of its having been surprised.

214. Then your information upon the subject of Ribbonism comes chiefly from informers?—

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Chiefly from informers, and from a case that was tried in Longford a good many years ago, about nine or 10 years ago, in which a parish master was concerned, and papers were found with him.

215. You have heard sufficient from informers since to make you think that the nature of the societies is much the same?—Quite the same, except this, that I think now there is not the same regard to the trials that take place; I think at first the Ribbonmen used to hold more or less an investigation as to the conduct of the person who was to be either shot or beaten, and now I think that it has degenerated more or less into a description of crime by means of which they wish to rid themselves of persons who may be objectionable to them; and the lower order of Ribbonism takes more power than they used to do, in former days.

216. What do you believe to be the organisation of the society?—I think the organisation of the society was, first, for protection for their land and farms; that was the original object, I think.

217. But what is the organisation of it, apart from its objects?—I think that the organisation, as well as I could learn from them, my informants, is, that the principal parties do not reside in Ireland; I think they reside more in Scotland and England; each county sends one or two delegates, according to the size of the county.

218. Where do they send them to?—Sometimes to various places in England, sometimes to Glasgow, and sometimes to Manchester.

219. For what purpose?—To the general meetings to be held by the delegates. The pass words come certainly from England, and are changed every quarter.

220. The delegates are the chief power?—The delegates in the county are the chief power. There are in several districts parish masters, and then there are body masters, who are the masters of a smaller body.

221. Who appoints those officers?—Those officers are appointed by the delegates.

222. What are the body masters?—The body masters may number two or three in a small townland, or round a village such as Rochfort Bridge, Tyrrell's Pass, Castle Pollard, or in such parishes as those.

223. The delegates, you say, attend the meetings?—They are obliged to attend the meetings under the penalty of a fine, which they are bound to pay. There are fines, and they are fined if they do not attend the parish meeting.

224. Where do they meet?—They may meet in a field, and they often meet at a fair, or they may meet at the common market. They frequent the same public-houses.

225. You could not speak with any great degree of certainty with reference to this organisation?—No, I could not speak with certainty. I could only speak from the most careful inquiry I could make, but I cannot vouch for the truth; indeed I can vouch for very little truth in what they tell me at all.

226. What is the lowest order of the society; the degree below the body masters?—The body master is the lowest order of officer of the society that I know of. They are generally at the fairs. If a man is to be beaten you will see them leading 15 or 20 men to beat him.

227. But they are not of the lowest rank of all?—The rank and file are the labourers, serving boys, and so on; they are the party men.

228. Are they in possession of the secrets of the society, or only a small portion of them?—I do not think they are in possession of some of the principal secrets of the society, but they certainly take the oath.

229. And they know the pass word?—They must know the pass word and the sign.

230. Are they bound to execute the orders of their officers?—They are bound under the severest penalties to execute the orders of their superiors, and beyond anything, not to prosecute. To prosecute, or to give information, is visited with the severest penalties.

231. Have you any means of knowing whether there is a large number belonging to that society in Westmeath?—I think it is very extensive indeed amongst the lower orders, the servant boys, and herds, and care takers.

232. Should you say that it was general or exceptional?—I should not say that the great body of the people belonged to it; it is exceptional in that respect; but perhaps a fourth part of the younger male population may belong to it; but its operations create such terror as completely paralyses the community.

233. Do you believe that it has spread over the whole of Westmeath, or only over certain districts?—I think over the whole of Westmeath; but there are some districts that are worse than others, and considerably worse than others. With reference to the oath which your Lordship asked about, there is one thing I forgot to mention, that in the document found with the parish master in Longford it is said that they will allow their right shoulder to be dislocated from their body before they will give evidence against or prosecute a brother.

234. And that you believe still to form part of the oath?—That is only part of the oath.

235. Do you really suppose that this society extends far beyond the county of Westmeath?—I have no certainty of knowing that, as my inquiry only relates to Westmeath. I think it certainly extends to the borders of the counties adjoining; certainly to the borders of Meath and King's and Longford counties.

236. You were in Mayo and Galway before you came to Westmeath, were you not?—I was.

237. Did you see any traces of Ribbonism there?—I never saw any traces of any secret conspiracy in either Mayo or Galway.

238. Have you reason to think that it did not exist there?—I think I should have known it if it had; I never saw any signs of it.

239. You found a completely different state of things in Westmeath?—I found a completely different state of things there, with this exception, that there is a general dislike in the Irish character to prosecute a man of any description; it is easier to get prosecution in Mayo and Galway for assaults than it is in Westmeath, but there is general sympathy for any person in misfortune.

240. Where are you stationed now?—In Louth. I have been there since October.

241. Have you seen any traces of Ribbonism there?—No, I have seen no traces of the working of it there.

242. Are there any outrages of the same description in Louth?—Not one; there was one threatening letter in six months, but that was a

case which I do not believe is of the slightest importance at all.

243. I believe Louth was once very much infected, was it not?—So I understand.

244. Have you been able to ascertain at all to what its decrease is to be attributed?—I understand that there are Ribbonmen in Louth, and I understand that there are Fenians in Louth, but strange to say I am also informed that they are both at deadly feud; that they hate each other.

245. I believe while you were in Westmeath you from time to time made recommendations to the Government upon the state of crime which you found in the county?—I did.

246. Will you state to the Committee generally what advice you have given?—At first, when crime became serious, I thought that by placing extra police upon the townlands and charging them to the people, that would induce all well disposed people to come forward openly and combine to put down the system.

247. Mr. *Maguire.*] When was that advice given?—I cannot exactly say, as I have written a volume of reports upon the crimes I had to report upon. I think it was about 1865 or 1866.

248. *Chairman.*] You recommended a police tax?—Yes; more particularly after Mr. Gavan's outrage.

249. Was there always the power of levying this police tax?—Yes, that always existed under the "Crime and Outrage Act" since 1847, but there was always a very great difficulty in collecting the tax on account of the innumerable forms that had to be gone through with the persons who refused to pay. There were a great many notices to be served, and technicalities of that sort; the cattle had to be seized and driven sometimes a long distance to the nearest pound, and then to be placed there, and then a certain time was to be allowed to elapse before they were sold.

250. Did parties frequently refuse to pay?—There was only one case in which there was a point-blank refusal that I am aware of, and that was at a place towards Tyrrell's Pass, in the southern part of my district. There a person refused, and he defied the Government for, I think, 18 months. Eventually his cattle were seized.

251. At what time was this?—This was before the passing of the Peace Preservation Act of 1870, it was in May 1869; it was found that there was no auctioneer who would sell the stock, and no person would bid for them.

252. You mentioned that there was frequently difficulty in levying the tax?—There were great difficulties in levying it in that instance.

253. Is it levied now with greater ease?—It is levied now with greater ease, but the people pay after a great deal of grumbling.

254. What is your opinion of the working of this tax?—I am sorry to say that it has totally failed to do any good in my opinion.

255. In what way has it failed?—It has failed in producing evidence, and it has failed in stopping crime. The only good which I know it does is this, that it enables you to have a larger body of police at your command for patrolling purposes and police duties.

256. It acts as a punishment on a certain district, does it not?—Certainly it acts as a punishment. Many of the inhabitants have to pay very heavily. I think each extra policeman costs 35 *l.* 10 *s.* a year.

257. But it is a punishment which falls as severely, or perhaps more severely, upon those who are innocent than upon those who are guilty?—It does not touch the guilty at all, because they are not able to pay; they are generally servant boys. Generally or almost invariably the criminal is a person brought from a neighbouring county.

258. Did you not speak of some of the persons belonging to this society as being small farmers, and one or two as large ones?—Yes, I did.

259. The punishment falls upon them does it not?—Yes; but then they are very few.

260. Do you think that it has any bad effects?—I am informed that it has.

261. Of what kind?—I am informed that the well-disposed are very discontented at having to pay this tax, and they see no good effect come of it. I know that in Mullingar myself I had to recommend that a number of the poorer householders should be remitted the tax, as they really had nothing but straw to lie upon, and a roof over their heads, although they were householders; I made a schedule of some 20 or 30 names, and the Government remitted the tax in their cases.

262. But that police force had been sent there in consequence of the murder of Mr. Anketell, had it not?—It had.

263. Do you believe that none of these persons from whom you were obliged to remit the tax would have been able to have given evidence with respect to that occurrence?—I think it is very possible that a number of people in Mullingar could have given evidence, but I am satisfied that if 1,000 police were quartered upon them for a year they would not give any evidence.

264. Why is that?—Because as certainly as they gave evidence, so certainly would they meet punishment either by being shot or beaten, or by having their houses burnt.

265. Then they are in greater fear of the vengeance of the Ribbonmen than of any pecuniary loss?—I am satisfied of it.

266. The grand jury have the power to prevent compensation, have they not, in cases of murder?—Under the new Act they have.

267. Have you seen anything of the working of that provision?—No; that has all occurred since I left the county.

268. You stated that in the early times when you were in Westmeath you recommended this police tax?—I did.

269. You have since come to the conclusion that it is of little or no use?—I have seen it acted upon in five or six cases, and I have not seen any good effect beyond the fact of its giving great facility of patrolling which the extra number of men no doubt afforded, and that may have stopped crime or deterred crime, but it has never detected any.

270. When you came to this conclusion, what did you then recommend?—After that I had nothing to recommend but the most active exertions of the police, but latterly in 1869, I did recommend that in cases where one had to deal with a secret society nothing but the very severest measures would be available for any good, and I stated then, that as during the Fenian times, the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act had suppressed, I may say entirely

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in the district, secret combinations, I thought that if it was applied in a limited sense to certain districts, that was the only thing in my opinion that could regenerate society in that district.

271. You have observed that during the period of the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act the operations of the secret society had ceased?—I observed that crime of that kind had almost entirely disappeared, with the exception of towards the latter end of that period, when the people became aware that it only applied to political cases, and then I think they were not so much afraid of it. In the whole county there were not more than some 16 or 17 arrests made, and the prisoners were subsequently discharged by the Government, some after one month's imprisonment, some after two months, some after three months, and some after four months, according as I thought it right to recommend to the Government the exercise of clemency, and upon their entering into solvent recognisances for good behaviour they were discharged.

272. Mr. *Chichester Fortescue.*] That, however, was never applied to agrarian crime?—No.

273. Nor could it have been?—No.

274. *Chairman.*] But the people were not aware of that feature of the case until some time after the suspension?—No; and in the case of the Peace Preservation Act, I am satisfied that the people did not know the nature of the Act for some time afterwards; they thought it was very much more stringent in its provisions; they thought that it was almost a suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act; they are not aware at the present moment even, that under the provision of the Peace Preservation Act of 1870, as I read it, in my humble judgment, if a man is arrested after sunset for being out, he need only lodge a notice of appeal and all your summary powers are taken away from you, as the procedure is under the 14 & 15 Vict., which gives an appeal to everything over a month's imprisonment.

275. Since the passing of the Peace Preservation Act, you have again recommended the same measure of suspension, have you not?—I recommended it in April 1869; I may have done so since, but I cannot speak to that with certainty.

276. I do not ask so much whether you recommended it formerly, as whether you do recommend it now?—I am at a loss to know any other remedy; I cannot speak with reference to any other.

277. Do you believe that such a measure as that could be effectually applied to the suppression of this Ribbon Society?—I am satisfied that it could.

278. Do you believe that you, as a magistrate, and the police are acquainted with the leaders of this society?—I believe the police are morally convinced that they are acquainted with them, but, of course, no man, unless he is a Ribbonman, can positively swear to another being a Ribbonman but from his acts, from his conduct, from his opinions, from the houses he frequents, from the interest that he takes in certain things, aided by the information that he himself receives privately, he can form a very fair idea of who the leaders of the party are.

279. Have the police more than a general knowledge that such and such parties are leaders of the society, or would they know who are parish masters and who are body masters?—I do not know whether the police are acquainted with their particular rank, but I do know that they are acquainted with the leaders and men of influence in the brotherhood.

280. I understand that you would only recommend the partial suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act?—Certainly.

281. Locally?—Locally decidedly.

282. Do you consider that such a measure would be applicable to districts where ordinary agrarian crime exists?—I think it should be only applied to where agrarian crime is the rule, and in the very worst parts of the country.

283. I understood you to say that you would apply it where you had sufficient reason to believe that a secret society existed?—Certainly, and I think besides that it would be received with a very great deal of pleasure by all the well disposed.

284. Do you believe that there are any well disposed people in the district?—I am certain of it.

285. Do you refer only to the well-to-do classes, or to any portion of the inhabitants?—I refer to any parties who have anything to lose, and who wish to have some liberty. What led me to form that opinion is this. Some 23 parties were summoned before me for the police tax, and made no defence. They only asked for time to memorialise the Government, which I gave them; I put a stay upon the execution of the warrant for a month. The usual audience, a Ribbon audience, were in court at the time listening to the whole of the proceedings; and after I had left the court and was riding away home, I met some most respectable farmers, who spoke to me on the nature of these proceedings which had taken place. I asked them what was the reason that these men made no defence; why did they submit to costs besides the extra taxes they had to pay (some of them being summoned only for 5*s.*, and having 3*s.* costs to pay), and they told me that those parties had been visited by the Ribbonmen, and informed that they should not pay the tax, but should resist the tax to the last, and that was the reason why they all made no defence. The farmers said, "Why does not Government arrest so and so, who is doing all the mischief in the country?" And I said, "You are not aware that I have not got the power to arrest." They said, "You must be aware that he is notorious."

286. Sir *G. Grey.*] They would not give evidence against him, I suppose?—No, not one of them, by any means.

287. *Chairman.*] You have no opinion that any increase of police, or any additional power given to the magistrates, would answer the same purpose?—I should be very sorry to say that there are no other measures which would be available, but I do not know them, and I cannot think of them.

288. Could you suggest any way in which the 23rd section could be strengthened, so as to become a more useful section?—I should suggest leaving out the words "under suspicious circumstances," and saying "found out at night, and failing to satisfy the magistrate that he was upon his legitimate business." I know many magistrates; in fact the majority, or the whole of them, read the words "under suspicious circumstances" as meaning that there must be some suspicion attached to them besides being out at night.

289. Some

289. Some suspicion that they are out on some illegal errand?—Some suspicion that they are out upon some illegal or illegitimate errand.

290. Mr. *Disraeli.*] I inferred from what you said that you had been resident magistrate in Westmeath for eight years?—I have.

291. Were you in the habit of making reports to the Government during that period?—Yes.

292. You mentioned one or two reports which you had made; you made a report about the meeting at Mullingar, when you sent up that oath which was found there?—Yes, I did.

293. You are in the habit of making reports, are you not?—Yes, after every outrage which takes place in my district I report the circumstances.

294. And besides making specific reports upon each outrage, do you make periodical reports, say every half year, taking a general view of the circumstances of the district?—No, I am in no way bound to do so, except that I consider it my duty to make any suggestion I can to the Government for the public good.

295. But are you in the habit of giving your views in a summary with reference to the state of the county, if it happens to be particularly disturbed?—No, I am not in the habit of doing so; I have done so once or twice.

296. With respect to acts of violence, that is, murder, attempts to murder, nocturnal visits, and threatening letters, what do you do?—Every one of those I report.

297. Have they increased during the last two years in the county of Westmeath, for example?—I think they have increased certainly since I went there, which was in 1863. I think during the years 1865 and 1866, while the Fenian conspiracy was at its height, they did not increase; on the contrary, there was a visible decrease; subsequently to that they increased again till I left the county.

298. Have you made any general report with reference to the state of the county for those last two years during which those cases of violence had increased?—Yes; I made a report two years ago certainly, and also when the increase of crime began again.

299. But not more recently?—Yes, I have made reports subsequently.

300. *Chairman.*] When did you make any?—In answer to Government inquiries, I made one in the autumn of 1870.

301. Mr. *Disraeli.*] In which you pointed out probably what, in your opinion, were the causes of that increase of crime?—Yes, I think I pointed out some individuals in it, and as well as I remember, I suggested another course to be pursued. I suggested the system that I stated, which was something short of what I previously recommended; that was the only thing that occurred to me; I suggested the system of watching, but I distinctly said that I suggested that failing the other remedy which I had previously recommended, which I thought was a strong measure, and one which I could not dare to hope would be applied.

302. That was in your report of 1870?—It was.

303. Did you mention in your report of 1870 your views with reference to the influence of Ribbonism at the present moment upon the county?—I can only speak from memory, but I am pretty sure I did.

304. All those cases of violence, with the detail of which you commenced your evidence, you of course reported to the Government?—All of them.

305. You are aware, of course, that even if they had not been so reported to the Government, those facts would have been known to the public generally, from having appeared in the newspapers?—Yes.

306. They were all matters of notoriety?—They were all matters of notoriety; the Government received the reports of them through the constabulary, and also through me.

307. Have you made any reports to the Government as to your views with respect to the expediency of a partial and local suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act?—I have.

308. May I ask when you did so?—I made it April 1869.

309. Did you refer to it again in your report of 1870?—I may have referred to it.

310. *Chairman.*] You said just now, failing what you had recommended before, that you recommend this system?—Yes, exactly; I felt at the time that what I had recommended was such a very strong measure that I could hardly hope it would be adopted, but it was the only one that I could see would be any effective remedy. If adopted, I believed that it would be effectual.

311. Mr. *Hardy.*] You made, in addition to your written reports, frequent oral reports when you were up at the Castle?—I made reports to nobody unless the Lord Lieutenant may have sent for me.

312. Exactly; but you made those reports by word of mouth, did you not?—I did not make any reports in that way; I had conversations, no doubt.

313. I presume you then reiterated the advice which you had given in writing?—I never went back upon anything I had said.

314. I presume the mode in which you would recommend the Habeas Corpus Act to be dealt with was a general suspension, with power to the authorities to apply it locally?—Yes, reserving the power to the authorities to apply it locally.

315. Otherwise, any attempt to apply its provisions would simply drive the evil from one place to another?—No doubt that would be so.

316. I think you said that Ribbonism was local in general in Westmeath, and had no communion with other parts of the country?—I will not say that it has no communion with the borders of the neighbouring counties, but, as those were out of my district, I cannot speak confidently about that.

317. You spoke of people residing in Glasgow or in Manchester who controlled the society in Ireland?—Certainly, that is my information.

318. Do you mean that they controlled it simply in the county of Westmeath, or generally?—Generally; they control the system all hrough Ireland.

319. From information which you have received in that indirect way, which you have described, is it your opinion that Ribbonism is confined to Westmeath, and the two neighbouring counties?—I think active Ribbonism, certainly is.

320. That is another matter, but has it been the history of Ribbonism to change its localities of action?—I am perfectly aware that it was in Longford, and also in Meath, and also in King's County.

321. But I am speaking of different periods of its

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its history. Is it not the fact that Ribbonism has cropped up in different parts of the country at different times according to special circumstances?—Yes, I think that it has, certainly.

322. You were a long time in Mayo, were you not?—I was in Mayo for four years and a-half.

323. And you left it so long ago that you are not acquainted, I presume, with what was taking place in Mayo just before the passing of the Peace Preservation Act?—No, I am not aware of that.

324. But you are aware that Mayo was one of the counties to which the Peace Preservation Act was specially to be applied?—I am aware of that.

325. So far as you know it may have been either Ribbonism or Fenianism in Mayo?—Yes.

326. But were not the outrages which were taking place in Mayo at that time of an agrarian character?—Yes, from what I read in the papers, and from what I understand, the circumstances are similar to those in Westmeath.

327. The armed visiting, and the noctural visiting, and the outrages connected with land?—Yes.

328. Should you, from your knowledge of Ribbonism, attribute that class of outrages to Ribbonism?—I would attribute it to what I say, I think, occurred in Westmeath. I think the coming of the Fenian conspiracy into Mullingar, engrafted itself, as it were, upon Ribbonism, and, I think, of the two, Fenianism might have carried the other into Mayo, but I cannot say whether it is pure Ribbonism in Mayo or not.

329. I would ask you whether, looking to the result, Ribbonism had not got to Mayo as well as to this county?—I should say it was something of the same nature certainly.

330. In your opinion are the Ribbonmen in Westmeath and the neighbourhood ready to take up with such a conspiracy as Fenianism, if they can take it up without danger to themselves, such as the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act would involve?—I do not quite understand your question.

331. Are their minds in such a state of feeling towards the Government of the country that they would adopt a conspiracy like Fenianism if brought among them?—I do not think that they would adopt it unless it tended to their own interest; I think the farming classes of Westmeath are not at all disloyal, that they would not take up any line of action against the Government if they were once rid of this nightmare which is over them.

332. But you have spoken of Ribbonism as if not general in the county of Westmeath, at the same time as ruling the great mass of the people?—Through fear it rules the great mass of the people.

333. And do you doubt that there is also a sympathy with the offenders?—Yes, I think there is a sympathy on the part of the lower orders with the offenders; but not on the part of anybody who has anything to lose in the country, such as a farm or even land to any extent.

334. So far as relates to getting evidence, do you think it would be practicable to get any evidence of those crimes further than you get at it at present?—I am satisfied that you will not get evidence.

335. Of course the information you get gives you a moral certainty as to the culprits?—Certainly.

336. During the seven years that you have been in Westmeath, I suppose, in your own mind you could say generally who were the persons who had committed those crimes?—I would not say who committed them, but I could perfectly tell who organised and who originated them.

337. Supposing the Habeas Corpus Act had been suspended, as you proposed, in 1869, in your opinion could you have put your hand at that moment upon every one of those people who were at the head of this conspiracy in your district?—In my opinion, the police and myself, I being a magistrate, could point out who were the parties who concocted and conspired to commit these crimes.

338. In your opinion, if you had so taken hold of their heads, would the great mass of the crime which has since taken place in Westmeath have been stopped?—Certainly, I thought it would; and it is my opinion now that if such a course had been proceeded with, it would have instantly checked crime, and it would do so now.

339. You say that it did so with Fenianism, which was also a secret society?—Exactly.

340. The operation of the Act was that no man knew whether he would be taken into custody or not?—That was the consequence, and they left the country and absconded in every direction.

341. And the ignorance of the people who were connected with Ribbonism led even some of them to fly also, did it not?—Yes, they fled fearing to be taken, and even now I apprehend some have left the country.

342. Even while this Committee is sitting?—Even while this Committee is sitting, in anticipation of anything that may happen.

343. Have most of these cases which you have referred to, of actual outrage, been preceded by threatening letters?—In most of the cases they had, or some warning had been given; but I understand that latterly they have not given warning.

344. With respect to Mr. Fetherston Haugh, who was killed, I understood you to say that the blow followed almost immediately after the non-payment of the rent which he required?—The day but one afterwards.

345. In your opinion was that a murder concerted after that non-payment of rent, or had it been arranged beforehand, and that the offering of the rent was a mere trial to see whether he would give way?—I can only give my opinion.

346. What is the impression upon your mind?—My opinion of Mr. Fetherston Haugh's case is this: that the going to tender him the rent was a mere trial, and that his doom was sealed from the moment he refused the old rent; it was previously arranged that if he did not accept of that he would be shot, and I believe that the three men who drove in the car to the public-house were the three men who conspired to his murder, and that that murder was arranged in the last public-house they were at.

347. That is to say, the mode of the murder?—Yes, the mode in which he should be murdered, and that the servant-boy of the house was the man who did it.

348. The people of the county knew perfectly well that Mr. Fetherston Haugh was a doomed man, did they not?—Yes; I believe the ostler of the hotel where his tax-cart put up, who lived in the house near to where he was shot, was actually aware that he was to be shot that very night on his way home.

349. I should

349. I should like to ask a question with reference to what the people may do for themselves. Is there any means of getting anything like what is called in the United States a "Vigilance Committee," to thwart the efforts of those people?—I do not think so. I should say certainly not, unless it was done by three or four magistrates, or persons in the higher grades of society, but I do not believe that any of the middle class ever would do it.

350. But as you have mentioned the higher classes, I should like to ask you a question about something which appeared in Dr. Nulty's Pastoral Letter, which perhaps you may have seen, in which he states that some of the higher classes of landlords of the county are in league with the Ribbonmen; do you believe such a state of things to exist?—Certainly not.

351. Let me call your attention to the passage; Dr. Nulty says this: "It is matter of notoriety that two of the most cruel and extensive exterminators in this diocese had been centres of Ribbonism in their respective districts while carrying their inhuman clearances through." In your opinion, from the information which you have had while in Westmeath, is it true that landlords have been the worst centres of Ribbonism?—In my time in Westmeath I have known no exterminators, and in the next place, I am certainly not aware of the landlords having been in league with any form of Ribbonism.

352. Let me refer you to this passage, "I have before me what I cannot but regard as solid ground for believing that the relations still subsisting between exterminating landlordism and Ribbonism are the very reverse of unfriendly"?—I do not understand it.

353. You have never come across such a thing in your experience?—Certainly not; I have never come across that.

354. You said that you knew some of the chief Ribbonmen by seeing them attend the different trials?—Yes, I have seen the same people go session after session to the same place, without having any case to attend, or any apparent business there.

355. Do you find that the people who are brought up before you are generally defended by an attorney or counsel?—There are attornies attending Mullingar now and then, but generally speaking, there are no attornies attending the petty sessions in Westmeath.

356. Have you had any experience of juries in those few cases that have been tried in Westmeath?—Certainly.

357. In your opinion, are those juries generally such as would do justice in these agrarian outrages?—Some of them are excellent juries, and some of them are very bad juries, I should say.

358. I think you have told the Committee that there has not been a conviction for homicide or serious outrage during your time of seven years?—No.

359. There have been a great many cases of homicide and serious outrage, some of which I presume have been before juries?—Some, but very few, have been before juries; the other cases have not been able to be brought to trial.

360. Then with respect to those, none of them led to conviction, at all events?—No, not one of them led to a conviction; there was only one conviction which was with respect to a threatening letter.

361. With regard to the police rate, I presume you think it fairer that it should fall upon the district which has been guilty of the crime, or of connivance at it, than upon the general public?—Certainly I am of that opinion.

362. And that although it may not answer altogether, is it not more just that it should fall upon the district which practically connives at the crime than upon the rates of the county at large?—That was my opinion; it was a very disagreeable duty to perform on this account; that many of the landlords objected to the tax, and when I had to fix the radius of taxation, all the interested parties were up in arms against me, asking me why I had included this or that townland, and I had to give in lengthened reports my reasons for doing so.

363. With reference to the class of arms used in those outrages, are not some of them arms of an expensive character?—We had only an opportunity of knowing that in one case, and that was where the police a year and a half ago stumbled upon a party who were returning from visiting a house, and in that case the arms were, some of them, of an expensive nature; there were two very good revolvers and a very good single-barrelled short gun.

364. Have you suggested in your reports any steps for disarming the population?—No; I took steps myself when that measure was proclaimed to reduce the amount of arms allowed in the district by one-third; but in such a case as that of a farmer holding 80 acres of land, I reported that he should have leave to hold arms if he required.

365. Did you suggest any plan for the better discovery of arms in the hands of persons who held them unlawfully?—No.

366. Have you any means of procuring information by which you can tell whether persons are generally in possession of arms in spite of that proclamation?—No, but I think that the Arms Act might be carried out more strictly. When a man is caught with arms, I think that he might be visited with more severe punishment.

367. Mr. *Bruen.*] You say that you fixed your operations for granting licenses for arms according to the scale of holding?—Certainly.

368. Is that the only thing which you have regard to, or do you have regard to character as well?—The applicant must be recommended by the nearest magistrate and by the constabulary of the district as a fit and proper person to hold arms.

369. Looking to these recommendations, have the applications for licenses in your district been a large number or generally a small number?—I think that in the whole of my district in Westmeath there are about 1,100 licenses for arms.

370. The magistrates, I believe, have a right to carry arms?—Yes, they have.

371. The number includes principally the farming class, does it not?—It includes the farming class principally, but I am inundated often with applications from magistrates for other parties for arms which I have refused. I draw the number at 40 acres to include the small farmer who wishes for arms for the destruction of vermin; crows do a great deal of damage to his crops, and I give them leave to have a gun upon their own lands, and not to pass their own boundaries, always stipulating that their characters must be unexceptionable.

372. What is the class of license which you

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issue to the men who have larger holdings?—To many of them I have issued licenses for pistols for the protection of their persons while going to fairs and markets, and driving through the country.

373. In the searches for arms which you have instituted, have you been successful in siezing many?—No, I do not suppose the police have found more than a dozen old guns; they are always old rusty things.

374. Have you reason to suppose that there is any large number of arms about?—Yes; I am satisfied that there are arms in the county, arms are never wanting to perpetrate an outrage, notwithstanding the utmost vigilance.

375. With regard to the Peace Preservation Act, section 23, I think you told the Committee that you had had six or seven cases brought before you under that section?—As well as I recollect, I have some six or seven Sessions to attend to all through the district, so that I cannot remember exactly.

376. Of course those six or seven cases do not represent all the persons who have been out under the circumstances described in the section?—I think that a great many may have been out, but the police were so satisfied that they were out only a short time after sunset, and that they were out for legitimate purposes, that they did not arrest them; but my view is that it is their duty to bring them before a magistrate.

377. Then do you consider that that section has been thoroughly successful in its working?—I have already stated that the magistrates consider that suspicious circumstances must be proved; therefore, I think that it has been unsuccessful in that way; but I think that it had a good deal of effect in the beginning when parties believed that they were liable to be taken up and imprisoned.

378. But you are of opinion that the want of success in the operation of that Act has been owing rather to its construction than to the way in which it has been carried into effect?—Yes; I think that there is a good deal that is defective in its construction, but in answer to your question I should also say that if the act had never existed, if an outrage had to be performed the Ribbonmen are so numerous, and their police so effective, that they would carry their end, the movements of the regular police would be so known that no matter what amount of police you had the outrage would take place.

379. But I gather from what you say that you are of opinion that the 23rd section has been fairly carried into effect?—Yes; the utmost vigilance upon the part of the police and the magistrates has been exercised to carry it out.

380. I think you told the Committee that you had never had occasion to have recourse to the 13th section, compelling witnesses to give evidence?—No; I have never had occasion to use it.

381. Why did you not put it into effect if you knew that you could compel the evidence to be given?—Because the parties could come forward and swear; my power would only arise if they refused to be sworn.

382. You have already stated that the extra police gives you greater facilities for controlling and for the detection of crime?—Very much so; when I applied to the Government for cars they at once acceded to my request, and I at once threw bodies of police into the district.

383. There seems, of course, to be no possibility of imposing the cost of that tax upon any other district than the district where the crime is committed?—I think the district where a crime is committed, or the district which may have sheltered the perpetrator, or where the conspirators reside, is the proper place to bear the tax.

384. Mr. *Downing.*] I conclude from your evidence that a great number of the outrages to which you have referred, may be connected with land, and disputes about land?—A good many, certainly; I should say the majority.

385. You were eight or nine years, I think, in Westmeath?—I was close upon eight years in Westmeath; I went there in January 1863, and left it last October.

386. Are you acquainted with the condition, in the county generally, of the farmers and the labouring population?—Yes, I am acquainted with them.

387. I believe that the labouring population in the county are considered in a very wretched condition?—There is a great deal of poverty in many parts.

388. Are you acquainted with the neighbouring county of Meath?—No, I am not.

389. Are you aware that the labouring population of that fine county are also in a very wretched condition?—I have heard so, certainly.

390. Did you read the charge of Chief Justice Whiteside at the last assizes?—I glanced over it; I did not particularly read it.

391. Do you recollect that he particularly made reference to the large number of poor people there were in that fine rich county?—I think I do.

392. Has there not been a large amount of consolidation of farms in those counties I have referred to?—Yes, certainly, very large.

393. You were asked by an honourable Member of the Committee with regard to the Ribbon conspiracies; are you aware that a Committee of this House sat in 1852 upon the very same subject with regard to other counties different and distinct from those counties which we are inquiring into now?—Yes, I am aware that Mr. Fitzmaurice, one of my predecessors, was examined before that Committee.

394. That was with regard to Armagh, Monaghan, and part of Louth?—Yes.

395. Did you know Mr. Fitzmaurice?—No, I had not the pleasure of his acquaintance.

396. I need not ask you if you were ever in one of the Ribbon lodges?—No, I was not.

397. Have you ever seen a copy of the Ribbon oath that you could trace to any authentic source?—I have.

398. Have you got that?—Yes, I have got a copy of it.

399. That you have traced to an authentic source?—Yes, I have it in my possession at home.

400. Are you alluding to the document that you stated here was found in a public-house?—No, not to that document, but I am alluding to the document upon which I formed the opinion I have expressed to day before the Committee.

401. You have a form of oath in your possession which you have not given any evidence to the Committee?—I was not asked about it.

402. Is that in writing?—It is.

403. Can you produce that to the Committee?—It

—It is not here, it is at Louth. I was on leave of absence at Westmeath for the purpose of moving my things down to Louth, and I was telegraphed to come to London, so I did not return to bring those papers with me.

404. Could you inform the Committee how it came into your possession, so as to enable them to form an opinion about the authentic source from which you say it was derived?—It was given to me by a police officer.

405. Did he tell you where he got it?—Yes, he told me where he got it from. It was at the trial of a notorious parish master, which occurred in the county of Longford some years ago.

406. Was that the case which was tried nine years ago?—Yes.

407. You have had nothing since that?—No; nothing in writing, but a great deal of *vivâ voce* information.

408. I think I understood that, in your opinion, these murders were generally committed by strangers?—Yes.

409. In fact a murder committed in Westmeath is probably committed by an assassin from the King's County, or from some other neighbouring county?—He may have come from any one of the three neighbouring counties.

410. It is your opinion the assassin generally does come from a neighbouring county?—Yes.

411. Then how do you reconcile that answer with your previous statement that you believe the people in the neighbourhood could all give information with regard to the person who commits a murder; you say that it was notorious in the neighbourhood that the people could give evidence with reference to the party who committed the offence?—Yes, certainly.

412. How could they do so if the criminal were a stranger?—I wish it to be understood that it was notorious, because the parties who brought him there were Ribbonmen, and being known to them he was known to most Ribbonmen in the neighbourhood; they generally conducted him to the scene, or near to the scene; but as to the actual murderer, I do not mean to say that he was actually notorious to the whole population in most cases; in some cases he was.

413. Then, taking the case of persons working in the fields, and seeing a stranger running away after committing a crime of that sort, it is not surprising that they could not identify the party?—In many of the murder cases it is perfectly notorious. I wish to explain that I gave that answer from information which I have received from time to time. In the case where Mr. Hornidge was fired at, in which a woman refused to identify the parties to whom she gave a drink of water, we had reason to believe that the parties were well known to her, and that the party who was believed to have fired at Mr. Hornidge was no stranger, but a man who came from King's County, where he resided, leading about a travelling stallion, and he was well known in the district. In the case of Mr. Anketell's murder, that was done by two parties from Mullingar, and they were well known in the district. The parties concerned in the murder of Connor were also parties well known in the neighbourhood.

414. You stated that this system of imposing a tax upon a particular district has failed?—I think it has failed.

415. You stated, I believe, that it did not touch the guilty?—No, it does not touch the guilty to any particular extent, as the guilty are men of nothing, whereas those who have to pay are men of property and large farmers.

416. Then it is not unreasonable that those persons should complain of the tax being imposed upon them?—It is very natural.

417. Then do you not think that it is very natural that it should have a contrary effect to that which has been expected?—That I have stated, and therefore I altered my opinion about it.

418. You also stated, that you thought that since the passing of the Peace Preservation Act things had improved up to the time you left Westmeath?—I stated that they had improved, but I qualified that by saying, that my experience of it ran from the month of May to the month of October. My experience was, that up to October crime generally decreases in Westmeath.

419. And that goes on every year?—That went on every year that I was there; the winter time is generally the time for settling the lands; the grazing lands begin to be let for the rest of the year before March, and that brings out a crop of threatening letters, and then they cease when the lands have been settled.

420. Are you aware that grave outrages have occurred from the fact of con-acre having been prevented; that that has led to a great deal of crime, not only in Westmeath, but in other counties?—Yes, I am aware that the fact of people not getting the con-acre and grazing for their cattle, did lead to a great many outrages.

421. Do you not think that there may have been at the root of the crimes committed by the society such cases as persons having been refused a piece of land for a crop of potatoes?—No, I do not think it has, as I have not known of any instances of people being refused land in Westmeath. I think the origin of the crime has been with those who have nothing except the shadow of a claim, 20 years old, to certain land, and who want a pretext to get hold of what their families had held 20 years ago.

422. Do I understand you to say that the persons connected with this society were, in your opinion, labourers and farmers' sons?—Small farmers, farmers' sons, and labourers. There are some few men of larger holdings belonging to it, they are generally the leaders of it.

423. I think that you have told the Committee that you were not aware of any evictions having taken place in Westmeath?—"Exterminators" was what I was asked about. I am not aware of there being any such.

424. You have known of no evictions?—It would be too much to say that I cannot recollect in eight years any evictions in Westmeath. I have known some for non-payment of rent. I have known rents raised. I know that Mr. Featherston Haugh had raised his rents twice. I should not like to say, but I have heard that he raised his rents three times within a short period; certainly twice.

425. Was the raising of rents general in Westmeath?—I have known some rents raised, but I could not say that it was a general thing at all.

426. With regard to crime generally, are you aware that there is much less crime now than there was in former years?—I cannot speak of anything connected with Westmeath since October last.

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427. Then with regard to the recommendations which you have made to the Government, you made those before the Peace Preservation Act was passed?—I made some before and some afterwards. I stated that I made one afterwards when I was questioned about that.

428. You are well acquainted with the terms of this Act, I presume?—I am pretty well acquainted with the section of it which applies particularly to my work. I do not know much about the newspaper part of it.

429. You are perfectly well aware that under this Act all arms in a district proclaimed must be delivered up?—Yes, I am aware of that, when first the county is proclaimed or specially proclaimed.

430. Under the 25th section of it, if any stranger appears in the parish you are bound to arrest him?—Yes, the police are.

431. And to have him brought before you?—Yes.

432. And if he does not give an account of himself satisfactory to you, you may commit him to gaol?—Yes, having previously taken down his evidence and transmitted it to the Lord Lieutenant.

433. In the 23rd section you stated that you would wish to leave out the words "under suspicious circumstances"?—Yes.

434. If you omitted those words, would you not have a larger power under that section of the Act of Parliament than the Lord Lieutenant would have under the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act itself?—No.

435. You arrest a party without any suspicious circumstances and he is brought before you, and may you not commit him for six months?—I suppose it would approximate to the power of the Lord Lieutenant; it would not be as great, because if the Act was suspended the Lord Lieutenant could direct the arrest of a party by day or night, in his house or at large, during its suspension.

436. Why not; in order to arrest a party under the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, must not you first send the name of that party to the Castle, and must not the Lord Lieutenant then issue his warrant to arrest that party?—I think it would be the duty of the police to arrest him and bring him before me, but not my duty as a magistrate.

437. But you could not commit him without that warrant of the Lord Lieutenant?—Certainly not. The Lord Lieutenant's warrant commits him to gaol under the suspension of the Act.

438. If you then were to arrest a party in any proclaimed district, and leave out the words, "under suspicious circumstances," you could arrest any party upon the high road after sunset, no matter what his character might be?—The Lord Lieutenant has the power to arrest him anywhere, either in his house or at any time during the 24 hours, and the Lord Lieutenant would have the power to commit him for a much longer period than six months. There is almost the same power given under the recent criminal statute; if a person is lurking in the street, apparently with intention to commit a felony, he is liable to imprisonment; he may be immediately brought before a magistrate, and if he does not satisfy him that he was upon his lawful business he may be held in custody.

Wednesday, 22nd March 1871.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. Bruen.
Mr. Disraeli.
Mr. Downing.
Mr. Chichester Fortescue.
Mr. W. H. Gregory.
Sir George Grey.
Mr. Russell Gurney.
Mr. Hardy.
The Marquis of Hartington.
Mr. James.
Mr. Maguire.
Colonel Wilson Patten.
Mr. Pemberton.
Mr. Plunket.
Viscount Sandon.
Mr. Serjeant Sherlock.
The Solicitor General for Ireland.

THE MARQUIS OF HARTINGTON, IN THE CHAIR.

Captain GEORGE TALBOT, called in; and further Examined.

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439. Mr. *Downing.*] I WISH to call your attention to the last answer you gave; you said, that "there is almost the same power under the recent criminal statute, if a person is lurking in the street, apparently with intention to commit a felony, he is liable to imprisonment;" I want to know if you referred there to the Habitual Criminals Act, which was passed in 1869?—Yes; I referred to the fact that he is liable to arrest under that Act.

440. Are you aware that that Act only refers to a certain class of criminals who have been previously convicted?—Yes.

441. Convicted of crimes under the two sections of that statute?—Yes.

442. Viscount *Sandon.*] I wish to clear up a point, regarding the feeling of the people of Westmeath, respecting the Ribbon conspiracies; is it your impression that the great majority of the people are very unwillingly subjected to the terrorism of the Ribbon authorities?—Decidedly.

443. Of all classes of the community?—I think of all the respectable classes of the community. I think the Ribbonmen have a great many sympathisers, but the great majority of the people submit to it with regret.

444. Not only of what you would call the respectable class, but what you might call the superior workmen, and so on?—I would not say the workmen, but I would include the farmers.

445. Would you say labourers?—I would not say labourers, but I would say farmers with small holdings of land; men holding about 25 or 30 acres of land.

446. If the system of terrorism which is ordinarily carried on from outside was removed, would it be felt as a great relief, not only by the wealthy class, but by the quiet classes of all kinds?—Yes.

447. And even in Westmeath the quiet people form a very large majority?—I think so, certainly; the great majority would be very glad of anything that would remove the terrorism of the Ribbon system.

448. Mr. *Russell Gurney.*] With regard to juries, you said that there were some good juries and some bad juries?—Yes.

449. Do you think that there is a reasonable prospect, in the present state of Westmeath, with the sympathy existing on the part of one class, and the terrorism over the other, of getting a good jury of 12 men?—No, certainly not; but will you allow me to explain, that the panel is not a very large one; ours is a small county, and when the challenges are exhausted, the best part of the panel has been exhausted, and then you can only get a jury upon which there is nearly a certainty of there being one or two sympathisers with the prisoner, consequently the jury generally disagree.

450. What is the qualification for jurors?—I cannot say what is the qualification, but I know that some men of a very low class indeed are upon it. I have nothing to say with regard to the panel.

451. Have there been any cases in which the venues have been changed?—Not that I recollect.

452. There have been one or two cases in which there have been trials, have there not?—Yes.

453. But there has been no attempts to change the venue?—There has been one case in which there has been a trial; that of Frele.

454. In that case there was no attempt to change the venue?—There was none upon that occasion.

455. You spoke of there being great poverty, both in Meath and Westmeath?—That is the case.

456. Are there frequent cases of offences against property, independently of those of an agrarian nature; cases of larceny, for instance?—No, they are very rare; they are quite the exception.

457. Are the persons whom you believe to have been the offenders, of the class that are in distress at all; in the agrarian cases, have you reason to believe that any of them are driven to crime by poverty?—Certainly not.

458. You

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458. You mentioned the case of an oath which had been discovered recently; you said that you sent that to Dublin?—I did.

459. Have you a copy of it?—No, I sent it up by a constable.

460. Mr. *Plunket.*] Do you believe that the oath to which reference has now been made is the oath at present in use in the society?—I cannot undertake to say that.

461. You cannot form an opinion upon that?—I would not believe that it is the oath now taken by Ribbonmen.

462. You say there was one trial; what was that trial for?—It was what is called a Whiteboy offence.

463. Was there a conviction in that case?—There was no conviction in that case; the jury acquitted the prisoner.

464. You said also that generally there were probably two or three sympathisers to be found upon a jury of 12 men in Westmeath?—I did.

465. Amongst those sympathisers do you include those who would be affected by terror as well as by sympathy?—Yes, I do; there may be one or two affected by terror, and one or two affected by sympathy.

466. You stated on Monday that in your opinion if you could have taken hold of the heads of the conspiracy by means of the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, the great mass of crime of that class which has taken place in Westmeath would have been stopped. Besides this effect, would it not afford increased facilities for obtaining evidence in cases where crime was still committed?—Certainly.

467. In that way such provisions as those contained in the 13th section of this Act if it were still in force could be more easily worked?—Yes.

468. Mr. *Gregory.*] I did not quite gather from you whether in your opinion those outrages were purely agrarian, or whether this secret tribunal took cognisance of affairs that occurred in the transactions of daily life?—I think it does take cognisance of every action in daily life, such as the turning away of domestic servants, or a herd whom you may have taken on.

469. I think you are aware that in Westmeath (I am not quite sure whether it is in your district or not) the mere fact of a railway guard having been turned away was the cause of a serious outrage?—Yes, I am aware of that.

470. Do you believe that that was in any way connected with the Ribbon conspiracy?—I feel confident that it was.

471. You stated that the heads of this conspiracy were pretty well known to the police; in fact that there was a moral certainty as to who many of them were?—Undoubtedly.

472. And I think you also stated that in many cases the persons who actually committed the offences were persons in the class of agricultural labourers?—When I say agricultural labourers, they might be labourers or railway servants, or men in that class of life.

473. Are you aware that last year a report was laid before the House of Commons with reference to the state of the labourers in the county of Meath, and that great discontent prevailed amongst the labouring classes in that county; that they were huddled together in the most wretched habitations, and were consequently in a great state of discontent and were evilly disposed?—I remember hearing something to that effect.

474. Are you acquainted with the condition of the county of Meath?—I am not competent to speak as to the condition of Meath.

475. As a fact, as a general rule the labourers in Westmeath are in a very unsatisfactory condition as regards their habitations and means of existence, are they not?—Their habitations are extremely poor; their wages are smaller a good deal than that of the labourers in the county I now live in, and they are generally very poor.

476. Can you state at all about what the ordinary weekly wages of an agricultural labourer are?—I know that the wages about Westmeath throughout the year, without diet, are from 10*d.* to 1*s.* a day; 1*s.* is the outside; that is for permanent workmen throughout the year, not for exceptional men who are taken in for a job. It may be said to be 5*s.* a week. In Louth I am paying some farm labourers 7*s.* 6*d.* a week, that is something more than is usual in Westmeath.

477. Do you think that if the condition of the labourers were improved, if they had better houses and a plot of land, they would be more likely to keep aloof from these outrages?—I think their having that would ameliorate the state of the labourer, and would tend to raise him above the level of crime, or sympathy with it.

478. Then you think remedial measures, as well as repressive measures, are necessary in order to improve the state of society in Westmeath?—I think they would be very effective; but I do not wish to be understood to say that remedial measures alone will ever eradicate Ribbonism.

479. The impression now prevails in Westmeath, does it not, that the law is perfectly powerless and unable to reach those offenders?—Certainly, that is the boast of Ribbonmen: notorious Ribbonmen have boasted to that effect.

480. Do you think that if the notorious perpetrators of these offences were shut up there would be a chance of evidence being obtained, that is to say, when the peasantry saw that the law was more powerful than these lawless combinations?—I can only express my opinion. I believe that if the leaders of this conspiracy were shut up you would easily get information, and that before they had been shut up for even a short period they would give evidence themselves.

481. You are of opinion that if they were shut up and kept separate, there would be a likelihood of persons giving important evidence?—Yes, I am certain they would fight amongst themselves.

482. If important evidence were forthcoming, do you think the juries would be afraid to convict?—I think it would be a very bold jury in Westmeath that would convict at present.

483. Do you think that the resort to the 29th section of the Act, which empowers a change of venue to be resorted to, would be effectual?—I think it might be effectual; it would certainly tend to obtaining a conviction if the man was guilty; but in answer to your last question, in which you ask whether the leaders of the Ribbon society should be shut up, I would wish to say that I do not think that it would be at all necessary even to confine them for any lengthened period. I think a very short period would be necessary, and that might be either on bail or to allow them to leave the country.

484. You

484. You think it would be efficacious to put them on bail?—I think it would eventually if they once saw that it was decided that effectual steps would be taken against them.

485. But if they were out on bail, do you think that evidence would be forthcoming; would they not take the same course as before of intimidation?—I do not mean to say the actual chiefs of it, but some of those who were not in the first rank might be let out on bail, as they would have a terror of being taken up again.

486. Have you heard it suggested that cases might be tried by two judges without a jury?—I have not heard of that.

487. Would you consider that the employment of a special jury would be efficacious?—Not in Westmeath; I think it would be a very unfair position to place the jury in.

488. You think it would expose the jury, even a special jury, people in a high position, to great terror?—Certainly I do.

489. In pursuance of the question put to you by the noble Lord, the Member for Liverpool, is it true that you have often heard, and that you believe, that there are many persons actually members of the Ribbon conspiracy, who are drawn into it by a feeling of terror, merely for their own security, and who would be only too delighted if this reign of terror had passed away?—Certainly I do. For instance, on one occasion the police patrol were going by, lying in ambush, and they saw three or four men passing on the road, and they heard one of them say, "We found it very hard to make that fellow take the oath."

490. Did the police arrest any of those people?—No; the matter was referred to me, but as they could not identify the voices of any of the three parties that were there, the police could, of course, make no arrest.

491. *Chairman.*] Was that since the passing of the Peace Preservation Act?—I think that was about two years ago.

492. Mr. *Gregory.*] You are of opinion that some of the very men themselves who are implicated in the Ribbon conspiracy would rejoice at any means of escape from its terrors?—I am sure of it.

493. The tendency of your evidence on Monday was rather a disapproval on the whole of the police tax; you stated that you thought that it pressed hard upon persons who were not implicated, and that it let the actual offender go free?—That was so.

494. I wish to ask you this; take the case which you described, of people working in a field and seeing a murder committed, would not those persons put a stop to such a proceeding, or be likely to give evidence, in order to escape the heavy tax that was sure to follow the commission of an offence?—No, I do not think so, because I think that the terror of preserving their own life was greater than the pressure of paying the tax; they would be certain to be either shot or badly beaten if they gave evidence, and they would much rather pay a small tax than do that.

495. Mr. *James.*] You stated in the course of your examination on Monday, that you thought the 23rd section of the Peace Preservation Act would be much strengthened if the words "under suspicious circumstances" were struck out?—Yes.

496. Do you think the section would also be strengthened if power were given to arrest not only during the night but during the daytime, persons who not only could not really give a satisfactory account of themselves, but were strangers in the district?—Yes, certainly, it would strengthen it.

497. Persons are often seen lurking about in the daytime who are strangers?—Yes.

498. If a person could not prove what his occupation was, you would see no objection to his arrest in the daytime?—Certainly not; it would have some effect, but very little.

499. Would you recommend that to be carried out?—I would recommend that to be carried out.

500. I think the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act was first put into operation in 1866, and continued in operation till March 1869?—That was so.

501. I believe those crimes, such as threatening letters, and visiting and violence, increased in 1868?—Yes.

502. I presume you reported to the Government in 1868 that increase?—I have no doubt I did; I cannot specify any particular report that I made, but I did report afterwards, in 1869.

503. Did you make any recommendation in 1869 as to how to meet that increase of crime?—I could not answer that question unless I went over my reports; it is more than probable that I did do so.

504. Will you explain the answer you gave to the Right Honourable Member for Buckinghamshire on the former day, in which you say that in the month of April 1869 you recommended the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, but you said that it was a strong measure, and one that you could not dare to hope would be applied?—I wish to say that I had a conversation about it with the late General Weatherall; he was then Under Secretary for Ireland, and I showed him the draft of my report at the time, and he told me that that was a measure that he feared Parliament would never sanction.

505. I suppose you are aware that in all suspensions of the Habeas Corpus Act, and all Acts that have ever been passed in suspension, the power of detention is only given in cases where persons have been arrested on warrants for treason or treason-felony, there is no exception to that?—Yes, I am aware that they were arrested by the warrant of the Lord Lieutenant.

506. Of course anybody could be arrested, but it is the detention I am speaking of; was only cases where persons have been arrested for treason or treason-felony, that they could be detained for six months?—I understood that the Act was only applicable to political offences.

507. Will you tell me this then: would you recommend that a person should be arrested under the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act only on account of being suspected of belonging to a Ribbon Society, or where overt acts of crime had taken place?—I would recommend it as applicable to any person belonging to the secret society known as the Ribbon Society.

508. Without that person having committed any overt act, but on being suspected of being a party to the commission of any overt act?—Certainly, because the party himself is rarely detected; the party involved hardly moves himself, but commonly commands others.

509. You would have in that case to act upon the suspicions, for instance, of the local police-

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men, without proof of the person suspected being a Ribbonman?—Yes you would have to rely on the evidence of the police, and what other evidence you could get.

510. I presume that that is generally suspicion more than direct proof?—You could never have any direct proof; that is to say, sworn proof.

511. Will you tell the Committee whether you think it would be safe to rely upon the mere statement of a suspicion by a private constable, and imprison a man for six months upon it?—It would be quite as safe in those cases as in the case of the numbers that were arrested under the suspension of the Act when it was suspended for the Fenian conspiracy.

512. But in that case relating to Fenians, were not they able to obtain better information, namely, that they were drilling, or that they were out at night, than the mere suspicion that they were members of a secret society?—No; they were arrested on account of their movements, the houses they frequented, the company they kept, their movements at night, and a variety of suspicious circumstances which were connected with them.

513. Would not their movements at night and their attending meetings be more capable of proof than that which is connected with Ribbonism, as regards which you have told us that their meetings are often in England, and do not occur locally?—You misunderstand me when you say that; I say only that the orders come direct from England; the pass-words and signs come from England, the meetings of the delegates may be the meetings of only five or six delegates, but the meetings of the bodies in Ireland are numerously attended meetings; sometimes there may be 15 or 20 persons at them.

514. Mr. Serjeant *Sherlock.*] You say that that paper you referred to came from England?—Yes.

515. Can you inform the Committee how recently you have been able to discover any connection of the Ribbon conspiracy with England?—The information upon which I founded that opinion was derived from an informer, who told it me about six months before I left the county.

516. Did you understand from him that the system was in active operation at the time?—I understood it had been so within the last year.

517. In reference to your granting licenses to carry arms, am I right in saying that you limit the licenses to persons possessing 40 acres of land or upwards?—I do, except under exceptional circumstances. For instance, if a man has been in any way threatened, if a man is a care-taker, a gamekeeper, or occupies any position which renders it desirable that I should exercise any discretion, I give him a permit to carry arms, although he may not hold 40 acres of land; that has been a sort of guide to me.

518. Is that the usual course adopted by resident magistrates?—I do not know what course they may adopt.

519. You do not merely take the fact of his being of good character as sufficient to entitle him to carry arms?—That is a *sine quâ non.* If I were to give permission to every tenant in Westmeath to carry arms who had less than 40 acres of land, you would have about 5,000 licenses in Westmeath.

520. But you do not consider his being a man of good character, with less than 40 acres of land, as sufficient to warrant you in giving him a license to keep arms?—Sometimes I have given it to a man of exceptionally good character, but it has entailed a great amount of odium upon me; it has been said, You give it to So-and-so, and do not give it to me, so I have the whole county down upon me.

521. Do the police patrol in uniform?—They did patrol in uniform, but some time ago the inspector gave an order to the men that they might patrol in plain clothes, which was carried out in the Castle Pollard district, and I have no doubt that it was carried out in the others, but that was the most disturbed at the time.

522. *Chairman.*] Does it really make any difference whether they patrol in uniform or in plain clothes?—Not the slightest; they are quite as well known in plain clothes as in uniform.

523. Mr. Serjeant *Sherlock.*] Was there more crime and outrage in Westmeath when you left than there had been at any time while you were there?—As I stated on Monday, during the summer months there was never quite so much; but I should state that in the spring of 1869 there was quite as much as when I left; that is to say, up to the passing of the Peace Preservation Act, and that it ceased after the passing of the Peace Preservation Act for a short time.

524. Were not there some persons in Westmeath who were in the habit of being constantly attended by escorts of constabulary, and who discontinued their escorts?—No; Mr. Dickson was escorted, but he discontinued it because he left; he could no longer remain; Mr. Hornidge is escorted to the present day; there are some in the Castle Pollard district who are still protected.

525. In your opinion the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act is the only applicable remedy for the existing evil?—In my humble judgment, it is.

526. Do you know Mr. Seed, the Crown solicitor?—I do not.

527. Mr. *Maguire.*] As well as I understand your evidence, you seem to say that you wanted evidence to convict persons rather than information?—Yes.

528. And only two cases you said were tried within a certain time by juries?—I think I said only one serious case.

529. If I remember rightly, you answered some question to the effect that there was some doubt with reference to the identity of the prisoner, because of the cap he wore being turned inside out?—Yes, I did.

530. Do you not think that in other counties a circumstance of that kind might lead a jury not to convict a prisoner?—It might; but the reason I mentioned that is this, because the case was so clear to everybody, and the party after he was acquitted boasted that he was the man who had committed the outrage.

531. Would you, because of a single case, think it right to advise the Government to alter the jury laws of the country?—I have not advised the alteration of the jury laws.

532. But do you not think that the Peace Preservation Act now in force provides a remedy, in so far that the Attorney General can at any time remove a case to another county by applying

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ing to the Court of Queen's Bench?—Certainly, as I read the Act he can do so.

533. Is not that a remedy?—It would appear so.

534. Can you imagine any more complete remedy than taking a case out of a dangerous atmosphere into one less dangerous?—No doubt it is advisable.

535. So far as I can understand, you must come to the conviction that the law is sufficient at the present moment to provide against an evil of that kind?—So far as the juries are concerned, but not so far as the evidence is concerned.

536. Do you think that the present law has been vigorously and efficiently administered?—With the exception of, as you say, moving the venue, which I know nothing about, I do not think that it could have been applied more vigorously.

537. For instance, you say that these Ribbonmen are suspected of holding their meetings in public-houses?—They are.

538. And I think, if I mistake not, you stated to the Committee that within a certain number of years you had known but one case in which there was an attempt to surprise these people at their meeting?—I do not say there was only one attempt, but I am speaking of a case in which there was anything approaching a finding.

539. Would you say that within the last six years other attempts were made by the police?—I really cannot say that; they never report their attempts to me. If any result takes place they report it, but they never report the attempt.

540. Suppose the attempt is made and fails, is not that one of the acts on the part of the constabulary that ought to be reported?—I never hear of it.

541. You can give the Committee no information upon that ground?—I have nothing to say to the constabulary unless they report an outrage and I visit.

542. I understood you to say that you only knew of one case of a serious attempt made by the constabulary to surprise these people at their meeting?—No, you misunderstood me upon that point. I do not know how many cases they have attempted, but I know that in one case they succeeded in finding the oath, and in seeing two men leave the room.

543. Had you yourself anything to do with the preparation of that attempt at surprise?—No; and I may say I believe it was a failure, owing to the constable not having communicated his information to the others, and to their not having gone in a body and made arrangements to surprise the meeting.

544. Can you give the Committee an idea of what kind of house that would be where those Ribbon conspirators would have met?—It is the house of one of the leaders; it is an hotel and public-house.

545. With a back door and a front door, I presume?—Yes; and I may say that his license was suspended afterwards.

546. Would it have been a very difficult thing upon the part of the constabulary to have gone to the back door as well as the front door to complete their work?—No; the constable in charge, I believe, was blamed for it by the authorities.

547. This Peace Preservation Act gives very great power I think to the local magistrates with reference to public-houses at the present time?—Yes; with reference to the closing of public-houses; that is section 24.

548. Is there not power to close them from dusk at any time you please?—Yes.

549. Has that been put in force?—In some cases I have recommended it, and in some cases in the country districts it has been put in force, but not in Mullingar.

550. How many cases in Westmeath, or in the places which you allege to be the centres of this confederacy, has the law been put in force against these public-houses?—I recommended it in two cases before I was leaving the county, that was in the Castle Pollard district, but I am not aware whether it was put in force or not; every constabulary officer in the county was asked whether he recommended the closing of public-houses by Government, immediately after the passing of the Act; two of the constabulary officers and the county inspector reported directly against it at the time, and I consulted the magistrates at Mullingar, and they were of opinion, with me, that it was unnecessary, inasmuch as there were 53 public-houses in Mullingar, and nearly 20 of them bore a very bad character; if you close one you must close all.

551. Was not it possible also to close the whole of the public-houses in the country?—Yes; but there was then no crime; it was after the suspension of the Act; crime had, as I have already said, diminished considerably; there was actually almost none during the summer months, and I did not consider it necessary to close them.

552. Your general object, as I understand, in recommending a partial suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, is to acquire the power of arresting and detaining the supposed heads of this confederacy?—Certainly.

553. Supposing an outrage happened to-morrow; have you not the power by arresting those people, and compelling them, or attempting to compel them, to give evidence, and, if they refuse, of keeping them in prison for six months?—I am not aware of it.

554. Have you read the 13th section of the Peace Preservation Act?—Very often; that is the section relating to compelling witnesses to give evidence.

555. The marginal note is, "In proclaimed districts, where felony is committed, justices may summon persons suspected of being capable of giving evidence in relation to such offence, and punish persons refusing to give evidence:" do you know that they have the power of putting a man in prison for six months in case he refuses to give evidence?—Certainly, I am aware of that.

556. Has that plan been tried?—It has all been tried, in so far as they have been asked to give evidence; they take the book and are sworn, and then they say that they know nothing at all about the matter.

557. When the magistrates have a moral conviction that they are the heads of the confederacy?—Yes, certainly.

558. If you can remand them for a week, may you not remand them for a very much longer time?—What power have I to remand a man when he is sworn; he takes the oath, and then he says he knows nothing about the matter.

559. Have you known cases of refusal to be sworn?—Never, except under the 23rd section. A man had been out an hour after sunset, and I

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asked him to justify himself; he refused to be sworn, and I committed him.

560. In the case of outrage which you have detailed to the Committee, was there an attempt to get the heads of the confederacy, and swear them to give evidence?—No; the head of the confederacy may live 10 miles away; he might know nothing about it.

561. Would there be no heads of the confederacy who might live within easy reach of the constabulary?—Not to my knowledge.

562. Has every effort been made to find who have been connected with this confederacy or not?—Certainly, every effort has been made.

563. Do you think the powers of the 13th section would be of any great value if properly exercised?—I do not think they would be of any value whatever. They might be of value if the witness had the slightest degree of conscience at all, in so far that he might give evidence when he was sworn.

564. Is there not a large power given by the 15th section, "Power to issue warrant to search in proclaimed districts for documents in the handwriting of persons suspected of writing threatening letters;" have there been many searches made for threatening letters in your county?—There have been many, and I am afraid that I have made illegal searches, for one of my brother magistrates has been let in for 200*l.* damages for issuing an illegal warrant.

565. What do you mean by an illegal warrant; how can a magistrate protect himself; does not the law authorise him to give a warrant?—If you will read the section you will see it only authorises a search in a house belonging to the person who wrote the letter. If the servant in a house was the author of a threatening letter, I could not give a warrant to search that house.

566. The section says, "Whenever any information in writing and on oath is made before a justice, that there is reasonable cause to suspect that any threatening letter or threatening notice was written by any person, and that there is or are to be found in any house or other place belonging to or under the control of such person"?—That is the point.

567. Are the heads of the confederacy engaged in this letter writing as well as other acts of illegality?—Of course I can only express an opinion. I am quite certain that they dictate the letters, but I am also quite certain that they would not commit their own hands to writing the letters, and more than that, some of them cannot write.

568. Could not evidence have been found of letters in their houses?—We have often evaded the law in this way. I have directed the constabulary to search for arms as the only excuse we could make, and then perhaps they might come across some papers. For instance, one of the leading members is known to the police as the son of a farmer, and I cannot give a warrant to search that house.

569. Are you satisfied that the police are sufficiently active?—I think that the police are active.

570. Do you think that the police are sufficiently active?—It would be a very hard thing to say whether they were sufficiently active?—I think they are active.

571. Are you satisfied with the constitution of the police as a means of detecting or preventing crime?—I think it could be made no better to detect crime.

572. Could you suggest no improvement?—I could suggest no improvement.

573. Are they not rather too much of a military body?—I do not think that in the state the district I speak of in Westmeath is in, you could do without their being a military body.

574. Would you supplement this military by a detective force?—I think they would be perfectly useless.

575. Will you state to the Committee why you would consider them useless?—Because when the Government have sent me detectives, they have not been 24 hours in the county before they were known.

576. How many were sent down at a time?—I have had three.

577. Suppose 20 were sent down, do you think the same objection would apply?—I think that they would be all the better known then.

578. Do you think that there is any mode of improving the police and of rendering them more efficient?—I do not think that there is any improvement, except that their time might be less occupied upon paper and more upon patrol.

579. Would you advise a larger number of police to be sent without at the same time taxing the population with them?—I think the more we have the better; I do not know how many there are now in Westmeath, but I know that I attended a meeting of the magistrates immediately after Mr. Anketell's murder, and we asked for a larger number of police afterwards; and with great difficulty the Government got them together to send them down.

580. Assuming that your recommendation was adopted, and that the Habeas Corpus Act was locally suspended, by what means would you get at the heads of the conspiracy in Manchester, and other large towns in England?—Of course, if it were only suspended in the county of Westmeath, you could not get at those in Manchester, but I think that their operations would cease in Westmeath.

581. If you paralysed them locally, do you think that would prevent the influence of those people in large English towns?—Yes; and I presume that if once suspended over even so very small a district as ours, the other districts might be led to believe that it would be suspended there, and that they would also desist from their illegal combinations.

582. Is it your suggestion, that these extreme measures which you propose should be of temporary duration?—Certainly.

583. For what time would you propose that they should last?—I do not think it would be necessary even to keep them in continuance for two years, and I do not think it would be necessary even to keep the men in confinement for a year, or for six months.

584. But you would not give the Government power to apply the suspension to any other portion of Ireland, would you?—I think, if it was once applied to any part of Ireland, they might, if they saw cause, apply it to other parts.

585. You would wish to arm the Government with power, so that if they please, or where they see cause, they may suspend the Habeas Corpus Act in that locality?—Yes; the reason that I have come to that conclusion, and one of the things

things which has brought it more forcibly to my mind, is this, that I stated that I thought the Ribbon Society and the Fenians were almost amalgamated; that the Fenians were engrafted, as it were, upon the Ribbon Society, and that when the suspension of the Act was passed, in 1866, I am quite sure that the leaders of the Ribbonmen thought they were quite capable of being taken up as Fenians, as well as Ribbonmen; that the Act applied to them as well, and that accounts in a great measure for the diminution of crime in those years.

586. How do you account for the diminution of crime at the same time in other counties in which Ribbonism existed?—I am not aware that Ribbonism did decrease. I am not acquainted with the statistics of other counties.

587. Is there not in other counties almost an absence of crime at the present moment?—I am so occupied with my own county that I have not acquainted myself with others, so as to be able to give any opinion respecting them.

588. Have there not been large clearances of land in Meath and Westmeath?—With reference to Meath, I can only speak from the public prints; with regard to Westmeath, I know of no public clearances; the landlords, on the contrary, there, I believe, are excellent landlords; I know of no extermination or oppression.

589. But do you know that in the county of Meath there are very large grazing farms?—I have read of that in the public papers, and I have read that there are exterminations going on there.

590. And that many of those are of recent origin?—Yes, I have heard of it; but I should prefer not speaking of Meath, because I know nothing personally about it.

591. But, as a simple matter of fact, where many farms are converted into one large farm, of course there must be a great many evictions, and there must be consequent misery?—Yes.

592. What is your idea of the origin of this confederacy?—From the inquiries which I have made, I believe that it was originally exclusively applicable to land evictions, and in similar cases.

593. And, even at the present moment, do I understand you to say that land has a great deal to do with this kind of crime?—Yes, it has.

594. It has been more or less connected with land?—I have said already that the Ribbon Society vows vengeance against anyone who will turn out anybody from a house, even a labourer; and also against informers; anybody who will give evidence or prosecutes suffers from their vengeance.

595. Do you anticipate any better state of things from the operations of the present law respecting land, that is to say, the Land Bill?—I think the Land Bill works very well indeed, and has given great satisfaction, but I do not think that it will be sufficient to, in any way, induce the Ribbonmen to give up their conspiracy.

596. You are of opinion, as you stated to the honourable Member for Galway County, that that would render that class of people less dangerous and more contented?—I think it answers its purpose in rendering them more contented, but I do not think that it will be sufficient to eradicate Ribbonism.

597. But do you think precautionary measures would alone be sufficient; supposing you had the power of dealing with this question, would you be of opinion that by merely putting down crime for a moment that would prevent its recurrence?—I certainly should think so, because I feel that this conspiracy is led and governed by a few heads who keep the others in perfect terror; I also think that by remedial measures you may lessen its effects; yet as long as these people can live by it and can dictate and defy the law, it will take much more than remedial measures to set things straight.

598. And at the same time, to produce a more wholesome feeling upon the community, you would improve the condition of the labouring classes?—Certainly.

599. Mr. *Gregory.*] In reply to a question put by the honourable Member for Cork, you were speaking of the difficulty magistrates had in obtaining any evidence whatever with regard to threatening letters, and the danger that the magistrates incurred in making searches in the houses; may I ask, is that not owing to the wording of the 15th section of the Act that you are only enabled to make a search where it is supposed that this document or those documents that are to be searched for is in the handwriting of the owners of the house; will you just look at the section and say whether that is not a great impediment to the search for arms?—I think it is.

600. Will you just read the section to the Committee?—"Whenever any information in writing and on oath is made before a justice, that there is reasonable cause to suspect that any threatening letter or threatening notice was written by any person, and that there is or are to be found in any house or other place belonging to or under the control of such person in a proclaimed district any document or documents in his handwriting;" that is what it says.

601. If you had almost a conviction that there were documents in another person's handwriting of a threatening character, you would not be able to search for them?—No; and you must have regard also to the very great difficulty that exists in comparing handwritings. Very few are able, and very few are willing to swear to the similitude of handwritings.

602. Colonel *Wilson Patten.*] You have just been asked by the honourable Member for the City of Cork whether Ribbonism is not generally confined to cases relating to land; may I ask you whether the murder of Mr. Anketell had any connection at all with land?—No; only as regarded a cabbage garden.

603. That outrage was entirely connected with his conduct as a railway official?—It was.

604. Are you aware whether the system of Ribbonism is carried on to any extent in the railway system of Ireland?—Certainly it is.

605. And that, as far as the railway system is concerned, it does go out of the county of Westmeath?—Certainly.

606. I believe it is pretty well known that on one of the principal lines of Ireland Ribbonism has a very great effect upon the whole of the people employed upon that system?—I speak as far as my own county goes.

607. You will not speak beyond that?—No; because the railway servants are always being removed backwards and forwards.

608. *Chairman.*] When you say your own county, you speak of Westmeath, I presume?—I speak of Westmeath.

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609. Colonel *Wilson Patten.*] You stated, in the latter part of your evidence on Monday, that you believed some difference of system did exist in Ribbon lodges now to that which existed some years ago?—I did.

610. Will you describe to the Committee what is the difference of the system which exists now from that which existed formerly, from any knowledge you may have received?—I think, from information I have received, that in former times the system was more regular. A person was tried, as it were, before some description of committee, and his acts were canvassed, and it was decided by a majority of the committee whether any punishment should follow or not. I believe that it has now degenerated into a semi-Fenian Ribbon society, which takes cognisance of every description of grievance.

611. What was the punishment generally awarded under the old system?—Invariably death.

612. And at what period should you say the system changed?—When I first went into the county I heard of such a committee having sat upon the steward of the Honourable Mr. Parnell, and that was described to me as a regular sitting of a committee to inquire into his acts.

613. Do you believe that under the old system these sentences were confined exclusively to eviction for land?—I believe under the old system they were entirely confined to evictions and quarrels about land; quarrels between party and party.

614. The sentences were carried into effect quite as much upon the tenants as upon the land owners?—Yes; if a person took land against the orders of the lodge, he was dealt with in the same way as the landlord would have been if he had evicted him.

615. Your attention, of course, has been directed to the effect of what is termed in Ireland The Extra Police Act?—Yes.

616. Do you believe that the enforcement of that Extra Police Act has tended much to the repression of crime?—No; I stated that I did not think it had; I think it made many discontented, and the only good I see from it is that it afforded more police for patrolling purposes.

617. Do you not believe that the enforcement of it has rendered many persons in Ireland disaffected towards the Government who had previously not had these feelings?—"Disaffected" is a strong word; I think that they have grumbled and dislike it, and it has made them, I will not say disaffected, but discontented.

618. But I understand you to say that it has had no good effect in the repression of crime?—No good effect at all in the repression of crime; it has made many people who were discontented disaffected.

619. You stated to the Committee that there were some of the magistrates in the county of Westmeath, who were still protected by the constabulary?—When I left the county they were.

620. Would you state about what number were under the protection of the police when you left the county of Westmeath?—Do you mean either escorted or protected?

621. Either escorted persons, in whose case recommendations had been given to the police to look after their safety?—I think there were five or six in my district, but that is only a small portion.

622. What was the police force in your district at that time?—I should think the outside was 200 men in my district.

623. What does your district comprise?—It comprises about two-thirds of the county.

624. Would you describe about what acreage, or what that would be in length and breadth?—I should say about 28 miles by 15 miles.

625. And what is the population of it?—I could not give the population of that portion of the county; some of it is very thickly populated, and some of it is very thinly populated. It includes the town of Mullingar.

626. During your residence there, were there any gentlemen, and other parties besides magistrates, who applied to you for similar protection?—Not for perpetual protection. I have been applied to frequently for protection to persons to go to serve notices for non-payment of rent.

627. By whom were those applications made?—In one case a magistrate himself made the application to me; we could not get the process-server to go.

628. Sir *G. Grey.*] Was that application made by him as a magistrate, or as a landowner?—As a landowner; he could not get the process-server to go, and the Under Secretary directed me to protect him.

629. Colonel *Wilson Patten.*] You are aware, you state, of the system of black mail being levied in the county of Westmeath?—Not under the term of black mail.

630. What term would you give to it?—You may, perhaps, call it black mail, but the effect of it is, that if a fine is inflicted, it is immediately subscribed for by the Ribbonmen, and it is paid. If I sentence a man to a fine of 5 *l.*, although he may not be worth 10 *s.*, the fine will be paid.

631. Is that system applied to tenants as well as landlords; is the subscription levied upon the tenants as well as upon the landlords?—I have never known it levied upon the landlords.

632. Are you aware of any case in which it has been attempted to be levied upon the landlords?—No, I am not aware of it.

633. It is generally levied upon the tenant?—The party may be a tenant, but if he is a sympathiser of any kind, he must contribute. I have known of a man being beaten for refusing to subscribe 2 *s.* 6 *d.* towards a fine, and his refusing subsequently to prosecute.

634. Do you know of some of the Ribbonmen making money by these transactions?—Certainly, I believe that to be the case.

635. Do you know of a case where 200 *l.* was found in the possession of a person suspected of Ribbonism in the labouring class of life?—I have heard that he was not in the labouring class, but that he was a farmer.

636. But he was a person who was well known not to be likely to have a sum of that kind in his possession, was he not?—Certainly, he was a very small farmer.

637. How was the money made?—From my inquiries into the system, I find that everybody subscribes so much each month; the collectors go round on a car for the subscriptions.

638. For what object do they subscribe?—For the purpose of keeping the body together for the general purposes of the conspiracy, and they are paid, as I understand; the parish masters are paid a certain sum.

639. Are there any fines levied for breach of the rules of the society?—Certainly; they are

fined

fined for quarrelling and striking each other, and for breach of exclusive dealing.

640. Where there has been a change of tenancy, has the tenant coming in paid a fine to the Ribbon Society to protect himself against the consequences of so coming in?—In the case of a man who was shot upon a farm for having taken possession of it, he stated (having refused to be sworn or to prosecute, although we believed he knew the parties to it) that it was too bad to pay his money and to be shot besides.

641. Do you think that there are individuals in the county of Westmeath possessing information with regard to the Ribbon conspiracy in Westmeath who could not give their evidence here without danger to their lives?—Certainly.

642. And do you think that the information that they could give would be material to this Committee?—So far as getting the truth from them is material, certainly I do.

643. You think that giving such evidence would be attended with danger to their lives?—I think the fact of their coming over here, and being absent from their county alone at this time, would endanger their lives.

644. You have left the county, I believe?—I have left the county, but I have not left the country.

645. With regard to the fund which was found in the possession of the man, the 200 *l.* you spoke of, and another case of 50 *l.*, which I believe came under your cognisance in another house, have you any reason to believe that that fund was applied for carrying out the designs of the Ribbon Society?—I believe so, but my brother magistrate will be able to tell you about that better than I can.

646. Sir *G. Grey.*] Do the leaders receive salaries out of these funds?—They do.

647. For their own personal use?—Yes, for their own personal use.

648. Mr. *Chichester Fortescue.*] And having the handling of these funds, some of it remains with them?—Some of it certainly remains with them.

649. *The Solicitor General for Ireland.*] When you say they make money by it, do you mean to convey that in addition to the payment they receive, they may apply some of the money to their own purposes?—I think so.

650. Speaking of black mail; I heard it stated a short time ago, and I want to know whether you know anything about it or not, that certain people of position in the county of Westmeath paid sums of money to the Ribbon Society to ensure their protection, which is what is generally known as paying black mail; did you ever hear of instances of that kind?—I have heard it stated, but I do not believe it.

651. You do not believe that local gentlemen contribute to the Ribbon Society?—Certainly not; I think it is quite likely that the local gentry may have some persons in their employment who may give them a friendly hint now and then; I believe my own gardener is a Ribbonman.

652. Do you believe that having those persons in their employment, suspecting them to be Ribbonmen, they retain them in their employment to get this information from them?—I do not know whether they pay them or not, but I consider that it would be a difficulty for any gentleman in Westmeath not to have a Ribbonman in his employment.

653. It has been said that the local gentry leave the administration of the law very much in the hands of the resident magistrate?—I can only say that I have never had a word of difference with my brother magistrates, but I see that the "Irish Times" recommends the withdrawal of stipendiary magistrates; I should have been only too glad to have been withdrawn before.

654. These local gentry are not prevented from taking their due share in the administration of the justice of the county, are they?—Certainly not.

655. Is it not the fact that the resident magistrate is always very glad to have their assistance and advice upon the bench?—I am always very glad to have it, and I believe it is the fact with my brother magistrates.

656. You said something about a trial in which a man was acquitted, in which a question arose as to the identification of the man's cap; when did that trial take place?—About 2½ years ago; it was the very day that Mr. Anketell was murdered; in the Spring Assizes of 1868.

657. In reply to a question put by the honourable Member for Taunton, you stated that except in the case of changing the venue, the Peace Preservation Act has been vigorously administered?—Yes.

658. Have you known any cases in which the section relating to the change of venue could have been applied in Westmeath, and it was not applied?—No, I have never known any case in which it could have been applied except in that case.

659. But that case occurred before the law was passed?—Certainly.

660. Have you since the law was passed known such another case?—Certainly not.

661. Therefore you do not require to qualify your answer, because you can state that, without any exception, the Peace Administration Act has been most vigorously administered?—Yes, most wisely administered.

662. You have heard of the case of the Queen *against* Barrett, have you not?—Yes.

663. You have heard that this section was had recourse to in that case, and that the venue was changed to Dublin?—Yes.

664. And that the prisoner was acquitted in Dublin?—Yes, that was the case of firing at Captain Lambert.

665. Now, you stated to my friend, the honourable Member for Taunton, that in the case of the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, and its application to political offences, the manner in which that information was obtained was by watching the movements of men out at night under suspicious circumstances, the houses that they went into, and the company that they frequented?—Yes, that was so.

666. Would not the movements of men out at night, and watching the houses that they went into, bring them under the operation of the 23rd section of the Peace Preservation Act, as persons being out at night under suspicious circumstances?—Taking it under the question of suspicious circumstances, I should have convicted them, but as I said before, many magistrates thought that those of themselves were not suspicious circumstances.

667. Then, in point of fact, the failure of that section has been owing to the doubt which has been entertained by the magistrates as to the suspicious circumstances?—Yes, that has been the cause of it.

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668. You yourself have been more liberal in your interpretation of the meaning of the section?—I am afraid that I may have exceeded the law in imprisoning men under it as I have done.

669. You have suggested that the section should be altered by leaving out the words "under suspicious circumstances," and substituting "found out at night without being able to give an account of themselves," or something of that sort?—Failing to satisfy the justices that he was out on his legitimate business.

670. In an ordinary case, the magistrates before whom the case was brought, would be the supreme judge, and would have to be satisfied in his own mind that the man was upon his legitimate business?—Of course he would, but there is an appeal as it is; and if you give an appeal, of course the summary proceedings are taken away.

671. I think you are mistaken in that; there is no appeal under the 23rd section, is there?—What I should say is that the procedure under the Peace Preservation Act is according to the 14th & 15th of Victoria, which gives an appeal to anything over one month's imprisonment.

672. You stated in your previous evidence, "In the case of the Peace Preservation Act, I am satisfied that people did not know the nature of the Act for some time afterwards; they thought it was very much more stringent; they thought it was almost a suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act; they are not aware at the present moment, even that under the provisions of the Peace Preservation Act of 1870, as I read it in my humble judgment, if a man is arrested for being out after sunset he need only lodge notice of appeal, and all your summary powers are taken away from you, as the procedure is under the 14th & 15th of Victoria, which gives an appeal to anything over a month's imprisonment?"—That is my impression; I may be wrong, but I certainly have been under that impression.

673. Is it not the fact that that only refers to the 13th section, and not the 23rd section?—I think it refers to everything in the Act.

674. Do you mean that irrespective of any provision in that Act, there is another statute which overrides this Act, and that wherever the imprisonment is over a month it gives an appeal to quarter sessions?—Yes, that is my impression; section 40 of the Peace Preservation Act says; "Every penalty recoverable under the provisions of this Act shall be recoverable in a summary way, with respect to the police district of Dublin metropolis, subject and according to the provisions of any Act regulating the powers and duties of justices of the peace for such district or of the police of such district, and with respect to other parts of Ireland, before a justice or justices of the peace sitting in petty sessions, subject and according to the provisions of the Petty Sessions (Ireland) Act, 1851, and any Act amending the same, and with the like right and power of appeal as in the said Act is given and provided for, and shall be applied according to the provisions of the Fines Act (Ireland), 1851, or any Act amending the same."

675. Does not that refer to penalties alone; it does not refer to imprisonment at all?—I dare say I may be wrong in that; I am not a lawyer.

676. But at all events, if this were the fact, and if that 23rd section were amended as you suggest, and if there were no power of appeal, that would give, would it not, to each magistrate a power of imprisoning for six months, and it would depend only upon the conclusion he would arrive at in his own mind whether or not he was satisfied as to the excuse that was given to him for the person's being out at night?—Certainly it would.

677. I wish to know whether these attacks upon houses, and these murders, generally take place at night, or in the day-time?—They generally occur at night; there have been some which have occurred in the day-time; all the visiting of houses by armed parties, and outrages of that class, occur at night; those which we call Whiteboy offences, and most of the murders, are committed at night. Welsh's murder was committed in the day-time.

678. Have you had any experience as to the action of the 39th section, which gives power to the grand jury to present compensation in certain cases of murder?—I have had no experience of that, as that has been acted upon since I left the county.

679. You have never yourself required an escort for your protection?—Never.

680. Is that on account of the men in authority among the Ribbonmen not interfering with magistrates?—I do not know; I have never received any threatening letters, or anything of a violent nature.

681. You told us that on one occasion a Ribbonman said that the law did not touch him as it stood?—Yes; that he ruled the country.

682. Was any attempt made to take the man up who used such expressions as that?—I cannot say; it did not occur in my district.

683. Was that told you by a police-officer?—Yes.

684. Do you not think that such a case as that in which a man told the policeman that he, as a Ribbonman, ruled the country would be a fit case for arrest?—No, I cannot say that I do; I know that I should have been sorry to sign the warrant for his arrest on that ground, as I know that the case would be thrown out by the sessions as an idle joke.

685. You stated, with reference to the Police Tax, that it was not an advantage to the district except in so far as it made the district pay for the extra police, without throwing the rate upon the county?—Yes; I have always said that.

686. And that it gave you additional facilities for patrolling?—Yes, it did.

687. In your time, have the military been increased in Mullingar?—Yes; we have had a portion of a regiment stationed there.

688. Was that done at your suggestion?—Yes; I applied for troops in order that I might make the same use of them as was done in Meath, but I was very reluctant to make the soldiers do the duties of the police as long as I could do without them.

689. At all events the soldiers were sent to you?—Yes, the soldiers were sent to us.

690. Did you use them at all?—No; I did not use them at all.

691. Did they give any assistance to the police?—None; I did not call upon them to do so, but they were ready to do so if they had been required.

692. I want to ask whether you can give us the date at which this printed copy of the oath was found in the public-house?—I cannot tell you

you the exact date of that, but I could refer to a memorandum which would tell me.

693. Have you a memorandam in town which would tell you about what time that printed copy of the oath was discovered upon the table in the public-house?—I have.

694. I think you stated in your examination, on Monday last, that it was in 1868; can you tell us what time in 1868 it was?—I think it was in the winter of 1868.

695. Was it in the early winter, or the late winter?—I think it was in the late winter. I know the house in which it was found.

696. Were any steps taken to trace where it came from?—I know that the Government endeavoured to trace it by its print, and I think it was sent over to England; it was supposed to have been printed in Manchester.

697. Do you know whether every effort was made in that case to convict the parties supposed to have been concerned?—Yes; I am aware of that.

698. But there was not sufficient evidence to ensure a conviction?—Yes, that was the case.

699. And it was, and has been, the generally received opinion that where there was not sufficient evidence to insure a conviction, it was better not to put the prisoner upon his trial, as the fact of an acquittal would give a fresh impetus to the commission of crime which was not likely to be detected, and that that consideration weighed with the authorities in directing the course to be pursued with regard to these prosecutions?—Yes, I know that was so, in fact, that acquittal of Frele was a triumph for the party.

700. Who was the judge who tried that case? Chief Baron Pigot.

701. You state that after that trial was over, it was found that the cap which the prisoner had worn had been turned inside out?—Yes; the man was identified clearly, and the whole thing turned upon the point, whether there was a white or a red band round the cap.

702. You stated, on your last examination, that there was an advantageous change in the law with respect to the warrant for searching for arms, and that it was extended to three months; have you found that change to act advantageously? Certainly we have.

703. Have you found that people who had arms, and who were authorised to have arms by the law, make use of them for the defence of their lives and property?—No, they do not; on the contrary, I may say that I think they are often handed out of window for purposes of outrage, and put back again. There is no help for it, they must hand them out for that purpose if they are demanded by a visit of the Ribbonmen.

704. Can you give a reason why Ribbonism should be so peculiarly violent in Westmeath; you say there have been no evictions upon the part of the landlords, and that the landlords are generally good landlords; why should that disease, as I may call it, be so intense in Westmeath, as compared with other counties?—Because this body of men creates such terror in the minds of the people that they must obey them.

705. How many resident magistrates were there in Westmeath during your time?—There was always one besides myself in the district; Mr. Reed and I have been always together.

706. Were the local magistrates and the resident gentry vigilant in discharging their duty, as far as you could form an opinion?—I do not like to say anything about my brother magistrates; as far as I could say, they were vigilant in discharging their duty; they are all landlords, and have numerous duties to attend to, but I can say that whenever they could attend without inconvenience they did so.

707. Mr. *Chichester Fortescue.*] You gave some answers the other day to an honourable Member which seemed to imply that you thought that Ribbonism existed in the county of Mayo; did you mean to imply that?—No, certainly not; I meant quite the contrary.

708. In one part of your evidence you drew a broad distinction between the county of Mayo and the county of Westmeath?—I did.

709. And afterwards you appeared rather to qualify that opinion; I understand you to say, then, that you are not of opinion that Ribbonism exists in the county of Mayo?—I cannot say that it may not now exist there, but I know when I was there it did not.

710. It is quite possible, is it not, that agrarian crime may prevail in a particular district without the presence of Ribbonism?—Yes, certainly.

711. And does prevail over all parts of Ireland?—Certainly, I have no doubt it does.

712. Are you aware of Ribbonism within your experience having enlarged its boundaries, and spread from one county to another, or not?—I can only speak of its effects; if I see similar crimes committed in Longford it might possibly be from the extension of the system, and it might on the other hand have nothing to do with it. For instance, in the case of Mr. Crotty's attempted murder the other day, I have no reason to suppose that that was Ribbonism, although I know that he was at variance with his tenants when I was in Mayo.

713. You know that in Limerick and Tipperary there have been many crimes, but that Ribbonism is not supposed to exist there as an organisation?—That is so.

714. Is it not the fact that Ribbonism has existed from generation to generation in the same counties without much change of area?—That is what I have always heard.

715. And that in Westmeath it has been hereditary and traditional for a long time past?—Yes; whenever I have got any information about it from anybody, they always speak of it as being peculiar to Westmeath.

716. I suppose you would say that in West meath Ribbonism happened to have had a certain number of very determined and daring leaders?—Yes, decidedly.

717. And that probably accounts a great deal for the amount of crime and terrorism which it has produced of late years?—I think it entirely accounts for it.

718. In Westmeath, you say, you could put your finger upon a certain small number of men who you are morally convinced are the leaders of this system; but could you do the same thing in Mayo?—Certainly not.

719. That is to say, that in Mayo where crime is not organised as it is in Westmeath, you could not pick out half-a-dozen men, and say, if you shut those men up, you will put an end to crime in Mayo?—Certainly not; I should hesitate to say that any man belonged to a conspiracy unless there was a visible organised conspiracy.

720. Therefore, there is that distinction between

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tween such a county as Mayo, and such a county as Westmeath?—Yes.

721. You are inclined to connect Fenianism and Ribbonism in such a county as Westmeath?—Yes, I am.

722. Are you aware that that is not the opinion of experienced persons generally throughout Ireland?—I have heard a different opinion expressed.

723. For instance, in the district where you are now stationed, you have told us that there is no connection whatever between them?—On the contrary, they are antagonistic to each other.

724. And there is a rivalry between them?—There is a rivalry between them, but I formed my opinion of their union in Westmeath, from the fact of knowing notorious Ribbonmen, who I also knew were Fenians; and in other cases, I was told that a certain Ribbonman was not a Fenian, but that he was a Ribbonman alone, thereby implying that union, and that many of them had become Fenians as well, so that they were a sort of mixture.

725. You have given us an opinion very unfavourable to the working of the extra Police Act in your district; I suppose you are aware that the Government have received very different opinions upon that subject from other parts of the country?—At one time, I myself thought it would be effectual, and I only altered my opinion when I found out that it was not efficacious; I am aware that there is a different opinion held by some people, but I cannot lay my hand upon any case in which I could trace anything that resulted from it; I should, however, qualify that answer further, by saying that in Gavan's case, whether it was attributable to the local police, or not, the dispute about the land question was settled after six months, and I recommended that the police should then be withdrawn, and they were withdrawn.

726. Have you had any experience of the application of the extra police tax in Mayo?—None whatever.

727. You would probably say that a measure of that kind might succeed in a district like Mayo, and yet might fail in Westmeath, where crime is more deeply rooted, and more difficult to deal with?—I can easily understand that.

728. You can easily understand its being useful in other parts of Ireland, although it might fail in Westmeath?—Yes; but you must understand me as giving my evidence entirely with reference to Westmeath.

729. *Chairman.*] Had you exclusive jurisdiction in the district of Westmeath where you acted, or was there any other stipendiary connected with you?—I was the only one.

730. You stated that in the system you adopted in granting licenses for arms, you did not confer with any of the other stipendiary magistrates with reference to any rule that should be adopted in granting licenses for arms?—I consulted with Mr. Reed, and we agreed upon the general terms that some line should be drawn.

731. In the case of the power of committal under the 23rd section, that the power given under the 36th section can only be exercised by the magistrates at petty sessions; who are those magistrates at petty sessions?—Very often I am the only magistrate present; at some places there may be another, and sometimes two county magistrates, and they compose the special sessions, but two magistrates, one being a stipendiary magistrate, are required to constitute a special sessions.

732. But you by yourself are competent to constitute a petty sessions?—Yes.

733. Are sessions often held by you alone?—Yes, sometimes, unless that were so there would be no sessions.

734. Colonel *Wilson Patten.*] It is not the habit in Ireland that the local magistrates should attend the petty sessions?—Certainly not; there are petty sessions at Delvin, and unless I go there there is no magistrate attends.

735. Sir *G. Grey.*] Then the execution of the law falls almost exclusively upon the stipendiary magistrate?—In Westmeath.

736. Is that the case in your present district?—No, I have five magistrates sitting with me.

737. To what do you attribute the absence of the magistrates from the petty sessions in Westmeath?—I cannot give the reason why they do not attend.

738. Is it from a fear of the consequences?—I do not like to give an opinion when I am uncertain upon the subject, but I am quite sure that it is very unpleasant for a magistrate to imprison a Ribbonman who may live at his gate or next door to him.

739. You stated that you believed that you had a Ribbonman in your own employ; has any outrage been committed in Westmeath upon any stipendiary magistrate, within your recollection?—I am not aware of any outrage upon a stipendiary magistrate, but I am aware, or I have good reason to believe, that the life of a stipendiary magistrate was in danger in one case.

740. Has any attempt been made upon the life of that stipendiary magistrate?—No attempt has been made upon his life, but I believe that it was in contemplation to do it.

741. I wish to refer to an answer you gave with reference to the suggestions which you made to the Government. You said, "I suggested the system of watching, but I distinctly said that I suggested that failing the other remedy, which I had previously recommended, which I thought was a strong measure, and one which I could not dare to hope would be applied;" will you explain to the Committee what was the system of watching which you recommended?—I was asked by the Government to consider what means might possibly succeed in putting an end to the machinations of those individuals, and the only thing which occurred to me was, that an iron hut should be placed close to the residence of the party within view, and that a police party should be placed in it, with cars or means of locomotion at their disposal, and that they should follow him wherever he went; if he went to the public-house, or if he went into the country, he should be always followed and watched; and I thought that by these means his machinations might be foiled, or that he would be so disgusted that he might possibly leave or give it up entirely.

742. Has any system of that kind been adopted?—No; every exertion was made to get a site, and then the person who first offered to give it said afterwards, that there could be none obtained; nobody would give a site, and none could be obtained.

743. What was the sort of person who offered a site?—He was a person of the rank of a gentleman; he offered it first, and then he afterwards said

said that it was so out of the view of the farm that it would be of no use.

744. Is there any cause to which you can attribute that refusal?—I have not the slightest doubt that it was through fear.

745. Did I understand you rightly to state that in ordinary cases of larceny there was no difficulty in obtaining evidence?—There is no difficulty in obtaining evidence in larceny cases.

746. There was no general indisposition in cases of that kind to come forward?—No general indisposition.

747. Mr. *Chichester Fortescue.*] In an answer which you gave to the honourable and gallant Member for Lancashire, you did not mean the Committee to infer that generally the Irish magistrates are not in the habit of attending petty sessions?—Certainly not. I mean to say that in the county of Westmeath the sessions were so situated that very few magistrates attended them.

748. And that in the county of Westmeath, whatever the cause may be, there is a very short attendance at the petty sessions?—I say that entirely with reference to Westmeath, not to any other part of Ireland; I confined that entirely to my own particular district.

749. Mr. *Hardy.*] Are there any particular difficulties in getting to the petty sessions in Westmeath?—In the district of Delvin, that I alluded to, Lord Greville is a magistrate, and he is away for eight or nine months during the year; he attends them whenever he is at home. Then there is one other magistrate, who is a very large proprietor. I allude to Mr. Fetherston, and it is very often not Mr. Fetherston's convenience to attend, and Mr. Chapman suffers from very ill health.

750. Sir *G. Grey.*] Do you know the number of local magistrates in your district?—I think the number would be about 100.

751. That is the district which you describe as being about 28 miles by 15 miles?—Yes.

752. The *Solicitor General for Ireland.*] How many court-houses are there in that district of yours?—In my district I think there are 10 sessions.

753. Ten sessions every month?—No; 10 localities.

754. And then the petty sessions are held in those places once a fortnight, I suppose?—Some once a fortnight, and some once a month.

755. Mr. *Disraeli.*] How many would there be upon the list of acting magistrates?—Upon the list of acting magistrates there would not be 20.

756. Mr. *Hardy.*] When you say acting, do you mean capable of acting?—Yes, capable of acting, and resident upon the spot.

757. *Chairman.*] And a large number of those magistrates do not reside in the county at all?—A great number; I can give you the number attending each bench; in Mullingar there are three.

758. Mr. *Hardy.*] Are you aware of any of those magistrates not being qualified to act?—Certainly not.

759. Are you aware of any magistrate not having taken out his dedimus, or not having taken his oaths?—Each magistrate has taken out his dedimus, and has taken his oaths.

760. You mean by the term magistrate a man who has taken out his dedimus and who has taken his oaths?—Certainly; three attend at Mullingar as well as myself. Four attend Ballinacargy, and two attend Collinstown, three attend Castle Pollard, Lord Longford, Mr. Dease, and Mr. Evans.

761. With the exception of Delvin, there is an attendance of local magistrates?—Yes, there is a general attendance; I do not mean to say that there is a constant attendance, but there is a general attendance.

762. Mr. *Bruen.*] You stated in answer to some questions that were put to you, that the outrages which had occurred in Tipperary and Limerick were not attributable to Ribbonism; do you state that of your own knowledge?—I have always heard that there was no Ribbonism in Tipperary.

763. You stated to the Committee that persons were formerly tried before a committee of the Ribbon Society?—I believe that used to be the case.

764. Can you state the nature of the trial; was the accused person ever present?—No, certainly not; his acts were canvassed.

765. It was therefore an arbitrary affair; it was more of a sentence than a trial, was it not?—Certainly, it was only a form; a mere farce of a trial.

766. Mr. *Downing.*] I understand you to say that in one case, under the 23rd section, because a witness refused to be sworn, you committed him; that was a party who was brought before you, taken up under suspicious circumstances; will you explain how that occurred?—Under that section I believe the man is a competent witness, and that he can be sworn; he failed to satisfy me that he was upon any legitimate business, and I considered that he was out then under suspicious circumstances, and I committed him.

767. *Chairman.*] He refused to be sworn?—I asked him to be sworn, and he refused.

768. Mr. *Downing.*] Did you commit him because he refused to be sworn, or because after examination you believed that he was out under suspicious circumstances?—Because I believed that he was out under suspicious circumstances, and I was strengthened in that belief by the fact that he refused to be sworn.

769. You also stated that your recommendation with regard to the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act would go to affect all societies which were secret societies?—I cannot speak of what may occur; I speak of the state of the Ribbon Society in Westmeath at the present time.

770. Would you apply that law to any society that had passwords or signs, or was known by passwords or signs?—I would rather not speak with regard to anything but the Ribbon Society.

771. If there was in another part of Ireland another society which was in the habit of committing outrages and serious offences, and which was bound by signs and passwords, would you apply the same suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act to that society and its district?—I am not prepared to give an answer as regards that.

772. You were asked a question by the honourable Member for the City of Cork with reference to the juries in Westmeath, and you said in reply that some were very good and some were very bad; I suppose that answer will apply to other parts of Ireland?—No; I do not think

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that there is any part of Ireland which is so bad as the lower part of the panel in Westmeath.

773. Are you not aware of parties having been acquitted in the north part of Ireland upon very clear evidence?—I have heard of that, certainly.

774. Mr. *Russell Gurney.*] The Committee understood you to say, in your examination on Monday, that you did not know of any eviction except for non-payment of rent; was that so?—Yes; I cannot call to mind any case of eviction in the county of Westmeath, except for non-payment of rent.

775. *Chairman.*] You were asked by an honourable Member whether any of the Ribbon leaders were supposed to be making money through their connection with the society; have you reason to suppose that, quite independently of any funds they may receive by collecting and receiving the funds of the society, their connection with it may be profitable to them in their ordinary business?—Certainly, it may be profitable.

776. As farmers?—Yes, as farmers, and in dealing at fairs and markets.

777. And in keeping public-houses?—And in keeping public-houses, certainly.

778. Do you believe that such is the case?—Yes, I believe that such is the case; and upon that part of the subject, namely, the receiving and disposal of the money, I may say that I am aware that the families of the prisoners in the case of Mr. Anketell's murder, or those who were believed to be his murderers, were supported, we could not tell how, but they lived always better than they did before while the parties were in prison.

779. Were any Fenian leaders arrested in your district under the Habeas Corpus Suspension Act?—Immediately after the Act was suspended there were 16 arrested.

780. Were they confined for a considerable time?—Every one of them was confined under a warrant from the Lord Lieutenant; some of them were let out very shortly, and some of them were kept in a longer time. I think that the longest period of imprisonment was about six months; they were all let out upon their recognizances for good behaviour, as recommended by me.

781. Do you believe that any of those persons were connected with the Ribbon Society as well as with the Fenian Society?—I am satisfied of it.

782. You never obtained any information about the Ribbon Society from them, did you?—No, they left the country, most of them I think; nearly all of them, I think, are out of the country.

783. In recommending the partial suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, do you consider there would be reason to hope that the good effect would be permanent, or that it would be merely of temporary duration?—I can only say that I think it, and I hope it would be.

784. You think that it would have a permanent effect?—I think it would.

785. In what way?—Inasmuch as if it was once done it might be done again; as in the case of a man who is liable to be taken up and to suffer imprisonment; if he is at large and goes through the same course as before, I think the knowledge that he might be taken up again would have an effect upon him.

786. Do you think that it would assist materially in getting evidence, and thus in securing convictions?—At first I do not think it would, but if you are enabled by that process to eradicate or weaken this society, I think it more than probable then that people would not be afraid to come forward and give evidence, but I think the process would be very slow.

787. You are of opinion that under certain circumstances information might be got from the leaders themselves; if you could thoroughly frighten the leaders, do you think it is possible that information might come in even from some of the leaders?—I think it is only possible, but I would not hold out much hope of it. Ribbonism is not the same thing as Fenianism; the rules are so much more stringent, and it is so secret, and the punishment it inflicts is so severe, and always carried out, that I do not think that which you suggest would have much effect in bringing forward the leaders.

788. Sir *G. Grey.*] And the objects of the society are different from those of the Fenian Society?—Yes, the objects are quite different.

789. *Chairman.*] Are you satisfied that if such a measure as this were carried out it would be not to the injury of the well-disposed part of the population, but rather for their benefit?—It would be entirely for their benefit.

790. You would have no fear of committing any injustice?—Certainly not.

791. Mr. *Russell Gurney.*] You would have no fear of creating that sort of dissatisfaction which you say is now created by the police tax?—No, I am positive that no man in the county of Westmeath who is unconnected with Ribbonism would have any fear of arrest.

792. Mr. *Chichester Fortescue.*] Is there any fear that any mistake was made in any of the arrests that were made under the Lord Lieutenant's warrant?—On the contrary, I have been informed since that they were correctly made; I have been confirmed in several of the cases, and as to the others I was satisfied at the time.

793. Has it ever been suggested in the neighbourhood that any mistake was made, and that anyone of those 16 persons was improperly arrested?—I have never had any such suggestion made to me.

794. Not even by their own friends?—Of course they all protested, even the worst of them, at the time, that they were innocent.

795. Was there any impression at the time that the wrong men had been taken up?—Not connected with the 16 Fenians.

796. The *Solicitor General for Ireland.*] Supposing that a measure for the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act were introduced into Parliament, do you think that there would be any danger of the press saying that coercion was being applied to the people, and that that would have an evil effect upon the minds of the population?—From reading the papers, I am quite certain that the one side would call it an oppressive Act, and that the power was made use of to coerce Ireland; I am perfectly certain of it.

797. *Chairman.*] Is there anything which you would wish to add to the evidence which you have given to the Committee?—I should like to qualify a statement which I made. Your Lordship asked me if there had been any convictions of

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of a serious nature, and I stated that there had been one. I should have stated also, that previously to that, in the year 1869, there was one other conviction. That was in a case where the police had come across a party of armed men who had been returning from visiting a house, and they arrested them with arms in their hands. Those men were convicted before Lord Chief Justice Monaghan, and were sentenced to two years' imprisonment; there were four of them. That conviction was obtained owing to the police having actually come across them, and the evidence of the police was the only evidence that was produced.

Mr. WILLIAM MORRIS READE, called in; and Examined.

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798. *Chairman.*] WILL you inform the Committee how long you have been a resident magistrate?—I have been seven years and eight months as a resident magistrate.

799. In what county?—In the county of Westmeath, stationed at Kilbeggan.

800. What district does that comprise?—That comprises the whole of the southern portion of the county, and a considerable portion of the south-western district.

801. You have heard the evidence given by Captain Talbot, have you not?—I have.

802. Can you confirm, with reference to your district, the statements which he has made as to the existence of crime?—Yes, the same class of crime that he has been describing to the Committee exists in my district; in the whole of it.

803. Have you found the same difficulty in obtaining evidence that Captain Talbot describes?—Exactly the same.

804. I believe that in your district threatening letters have been exceedingly numerous?—Yes, they have been exceedingly numerous of late; the last year and a half or two years particularly, I should say.

805. Has that class of offence been in existence during the whole of your connection with the county?—Yes, during the whole time that I have been in the county.

806. But they have become more numerous of late?—They have become more numerous of late.

807. Do those threatening letters generally come through the post, or are they left at the houses by private men?—The letters invariably come through the post, but the threatening notices are posted on the doors, or on trees near chapels, and on gates, or the piers of gates.

808. Have there been any cases in which you have been able to detect the authors, or any person connected with those threatening letters?—There has been only one case of conviction during the time that I have been in the county; that was the case that Captain Talbot described of ——. I took the depositions in his absence, being then in charge of his district.

809. Have you got sufficient information in any of those cases to send the case for trial?—Information, no, but we had strong suspicion in one instance, but the Attorney General thought it better not to prosecute.

810. But in general you have not only sufficient evidence, but you have very little knowledge of the actual author?—We have sometimes very strong suspicions, and information from the police.

811. In the only case which has been sent for trial you obtained a conviction, did you not?—That is the only case.

812. But in all the other cases you could not obtain sufficient evidence to send the case for trial?—We could not obtain sufficient evidence to warrant a prosecution.

813. In your district are there at this moment any instances of farms being vacant, on account of threatened outrages in connection with those farms?—There are three farms vacant at present.

814. Have they been vacant for some time?—One has been vacant for the last 12 or 14 years.

815. Without mentioning the names, perhaps you will just describe the circumstances of this vacant farm?—In the first instance, the farm became vacant from non-payment of the rent in 1857, and it was subsequently taken, in the first instance, by a man who took conacre upon it. He was fired at upon the road going to Kilbeggan. A shot was fired over his head, and he was threatened and told to leave the farm, which he did not do, and shortly afterwards he was shot dead on his way home from Kilbeggan market.

816. Sir *G. Grey.*] Who was that?—Edward Kelly. He was shot upon the 6th February 1858.

817. *Chairman.*] What is the next case?—Subsequently a man of the name of Jessop took the same farm; he took the entire farm, and a protective party of police were stationed in the house; he was also shot in the middle of the day on his way home from Kilbeggan market upon the high road, and died from the effects in a week or so; that was on the 30th of April 1859.

818. That was the next year?—Yes.

819. Sir *G. Grey.*] Were those men shot soon after taking the farm?—Almost immediately after taking the farm; since then no one has ever dared to take the farm.

820. *Chairman.*] Have attempts been made by the landlord to let it?—Yes; there were attempts made to let it, but no settlement was made; it is now used for agistment purposes altogether.

821. Was any resistance made to cattle being turned out to graze upon that farm?—No, not upon that farm.

822. But the farm remains unlet and cannot be let?—The farm remains unlet, and cannot be let.

823. There has been no outrage in connection with it since 1859?—None whatever, until a short time ago it was considered that the farm had been let *sub rosâ*, and threatening letters were sent to the agent at once.

824. Because it was suspected that it had been let?—Because it was suspected in the country to have been let.

825. Now will you give the Committee the history of any other case?—In the year 1863 the then tenant of —— farm was evicted; he got into difficulties, and was evicted; he was very leniently dealt with by the agent, who allowed him to sell his crops, and so forth.

826. Sir *G. Grey.*] He got into difficulties, and

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and could not pay his rent?—He got into difficulties, and he could not pay his rent; that was in 1863, and in the commencement of 1864 the agent got a threatening letter.

827. *Chairman.*] Was the farm re-let then?—No; it was not re-let at that time; the agent got a threatening letter, telling him to pay more money on account to the outgoing tenant, and giving him a certain time to pay it in, or to be shot.

828. What happened then?—The previous tenant went to Australia, and the agent then got a succession of threatening letters about the farm, dictating who he was to give it to, not mentioning any person, but speaking of a person in his parish, and a neighbour.

829. Do you know whether the agent did pay any more money to the out-going tenant?—No; he paid no more.

830. And the tenant went to Australia?—The tenant went to Australia, and the agent after receiving these threatening letters invited tenders for the farm. Several people came to look at it, and as every person walked the farm he immediately received a threatening letter, all in the same handwriting. Some time after that a man from some little distance off came and took the farm, and remained in possession for a short time, he was fired at on his way to the farm in the morning, and was wounded in nine places.

831. In what year was that?—That was on the 16th of February 1867, previous to which time he had received threatening letters with regard to his servants, ordering him to dismiss them, and not to allow them to remain upon the farm, and an armed party went to one of the servants, and beat him, and ordered him to leave the farm.

832. That was in the year 1867?—That was in the year 1867, and the man himself refused to give any sworn evidence at all to me; I saw him an hour after he had been shot, and he would not tell me a word about it on oath; ultimately he gave it up in the November following; I ought to mention that previous to this man having taken the farm, the agent himself was fired at upon the high road, owing to his having let the farm to this man.

833. Having received a series of threatening letters in the first instance?—Yes.

834. Since the man who was wounded left the farm, has it been let?—No one has dared to take the farm since.

835. In the meantime, what has become of the farm?—The agent endeavoured to take in grazing cattle, not only from people in the neighbourhood, but from the surrounding district, and he immediately got threatening letters, and threatening notices were posted, telling the inhabitants of the neighbourhood that the farm was solely for the immediate neighbours, and that nobody else should be allowed to send their cattle there; so he had a few cattle taken in on agistment, and has received about 15*s.* or 18*s.* an acre all round.

836. Which, I presume, is far below its value, I believe?—That is far below its value.

837. What would be about the value?—I think he has been offered 25*s.* or 27*s.* an acre for it.

838. He has been actually offered that rent?—Yes, but it was by a certain party.

839. A party who knew that he would not be objected to?—Yes.

840. And who knew that he could take it with impunity?—Yes; I may mention that some of the stock of the people who were not neighbours were driven away by an armed party, and shots were fired on the morning that they were driven away.

841. Was it daylight or night?—It was a summer's morning, and broad daylight.

842. And there was no interference by the police?—There was no interference by the police in that case; they did not see them.

843. You told the Committee that a number of threatening letters were received in that case, are they in the same handwriting?—I have a great number of them in my pocket if the Committee would wish to see them—(*the same were handed in*).

844. Was there no possibility of obtaining evidence with reference to the writers of those letters?—Not the slightest; we made every possible effort to trace them, but without success.

845. Have there been any threatening letters about that farm recently?—Within the last 12 months there have been notices posted with regard to it. These (*producing some letters*) are the notices in connection with that farm, and also in connection with other farms, showing the same organisation, and that the same scribe works for them.

846. Mr. Serjeant *Sherlock.*] Are they all in the same handwriting?—There are many of them in the same handwriting.

847. Are they in envelopes?—Yes; they are principally posted at Kilbeggan.

848. *Chairman.*] You state that great efforts were made to discover the writers of those letters?—Yes, every possible effort was made, both by police in plain clothes and by police in uniform, and by watching the post office, and everything else that could be done was done.

849. With reference to the third case?—The third case is the case of a farm in the immediate neighbourhood of Kilbeggan, from which the tenant was evicted in 1868 for non-payment of rent; that is a small farm; it was then let to a neighbour, who handed it over to his brother, and he, or rather his mother-in-law, immediately got a threatening letter about it: an armed party went to his house, and ordered him to give up the farm.

850. Sir *G. Grey.*] Do you know how much rent was due?—I do not think that there was more than about two years' rent due, or possibly not more than three half years' rent.

851. *Chairman.*] The brother was threatened, I believe?—The brother was threatened, and not only threatened, but last year, 1870, an armed person went to his house, and parleyed with him for some time with regard to giving up the farm, and on going away fired a shot at him, and he gave up the farm.

852. Did he report that outrage?—No, not upon its first occurrence, but the police heard of it in about three or four hours afterwards. I mean the first outrage, the armed party of men; not the second, when only one armed man went to his house.

853. Did he give any information?—He gave simply the ordinary information that a party of men had been there, but he could not describe any of them.

854. Did he appear unwilling to give evidence?—Quite so.

855. When did he give that farm up?—He gave

gave the farm up last year after the visit of the one armed man.

856. Has it been let since?—No, and it is too small to turn to agistment purposes, so it is growing nothing but weeds.

857. Would the landlord let it if he could?—The agent who lives in Kilbeggan would be only too glad to let it.

858. Is it well known in the country that it would be unsafe to take it?—Perfectly unsafe; no man dare take it.

859. Could not a neighbour take it as in the other case?—A neighbour did take it, and he was fired at.

860. Did you investigate the case of the murder of Dowling?—Yes.

861. When did that take place?—In last November.

862. Were there any circumstances of an agrarian character in that case?—Nothing connected with land at all.

863. Will you give the Committee just a short account of that case?—About two years before this man had been employed by a miller in the neighbourhood, and had taken the place of a care-taker, who was put away. He did not suit this gentleman; he got no threatening notice of any kind, but his employers got a hint from a man who lived 12 miles off, that a man in their employment, mentioning the wrong name, not the name of the man who was shot, but stating that such a person should take care of himself, that he should keep in the middle of the road when going through a bog, and so forth, and he did so; but the man himself received no threatening letter or notice of any kind that he should go away, but Messrs. Perry, the employers, did receive threatening letters during the two years previous, ordering this man Dowling to be removed amongst others.

864. Were any extra precautions taken by the police in that case, and in similar cases?—Yes; as regards Messrs. Perry, they were constantly watched by the police.

865. You say Messrs. Perry were ordered to dismiss Dowling?—Yes, amongst others.

866. Was any protection given to Dowling?—Yes; he asked for and received a revolver, and he was watched carefully by the police.

867. That was two years ago?—That was two years preceding his murder in November last, and as he was passing into his house on about the 20th of November, at the door the assassin was within three yards of him and shot him dead.

868. Sir *G. Grey.*] Where were the police who were appointed to watch him?—At the time the blunderbuss was fired they were 35 yards from the scene of the murder; they turned out and ran in every direction about the village, but it was a pitch dark night, and a thick fog, and they could see nothing of the assassin.

869. *Chairman.*] The report was heard?—The report was heard, and it was described as being like the report of a small cannon.

870. Were any persons arrested for this murder?—Two persons were arrested, but I discharged them in the morning.

871. Had you been able to get any information about the affair?—We had received information privately that a boy had posted those threatening letters to Messrs. Perry; he was arrested, and brought before me and the other magistrates. He refused to be sworn, and we committed him.

872. Did you receive any certain information with regard to the actual perpetrator of the murder?—No tangible information; the boy, after being incarcerated for four or five days (he was a boy of about 16 years of age), sent me word that he would consent to be sworn, and on being brought out from gaol, I tendered him the oath, and he took it, and swore that he knew nothing at all about it. I had to emancipate him directly.

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873. Are the Committee to understand that you got no information, either public or private, respecting the murderer, or only that you could not get any evidence that would lead to a prosecution?—Neither public nor private information, nor any evidence in connection with that case.

874. Have you any reason to suppose that any person in the neighbourhood could have given evidence?—I think the crime was known to very few in this instance.

875. But you have, in investigating other cases, found the same difficulty to which Captain Talbot referred in obtaining evidence?—There is not a man in the county who would give a particle of evidence in any district.

876. Neither information or evidence?—Neither the one or the other. I should say that there are men who are giving considerable information at present as "informers."

877. But not of such a character as you can lay before a court?—You cannot use it at all except to stop outrages that are about to be committed or arrest parties in the very act.

878. Sir *G. Grey.*] Why is that?—Because the man who gives the information is a Ribbonman himself.

879. But why cannot these men be summoned before the court under the 13th section?—The man is a Ribbonman; he is a member of an illegal and secret society, and his evidence would not be admitted for a moment in a court of justice.

880. He would not give his evidence, would he?—It would be of no use if he did, but he would not.

881. *Chairman.*] Do you not receive information of this character, simply upon the understanding that the informer's name shall not be betrayed?—They would not give it without a certainty of secrecy.

882. It is of some little value to give?—No doubt. It has enabled the police, to a certain extent, to stop outrages being committed, and to arrest offenders immediately after the perpetration of an outrage.

883. You are of opinion that the greater part of the outrages, both of a serious and of a minor character which have taken place in your district, are the work of the Ribbon Society?—I am perfectly satisfied that that is the case.

884. You have arrived at that opinion upon the same grounds as those which Captain Talbot has communicated to the Committee, I presume?—Certainly, with this addition, that of late years, within the last two years, we have been actually receiving from the Ribbonmen information, which we have proved to be correct.

885. Why are you satisfied that it is correct?—It has proved itself to be correct, because we arrested the parties.

886. Have you obtained any convictions?—Yes, we obtained a conviction at the last assizes.

887. For what offence?—For firing at the police,

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police, and belonging to a party who visited some houses at night, ordering the people to give up some land. Upon their return from these nocturnal visits they were intercepted, and they fired upon the police, and the police returned the fire, and one of the parties was tried at the last Mullingar Assizes and received seven years' transportation. That was entirely owing to private information.

888. What number of people in your district are under protection?—There are six parties under protection.

889. What kind of protection?—Two policemen are constantly with them. One gentleman has two policemen attending him; a second party has two policemen in his house and also with him, and a third party has two policemen with him, and a widow has also two policemen in her house and with her. The next is the case of a farmer whose wife behaved uncommonly well and prosecuted parties, she also had two policemen ever since the prosecution.

890. You did not obtain a conviction in that case?—No; there was a failure, the jury did not agree.

891. What was the prosecution for?—There had been a man going to the house on three occasions, week by week, and ordering those parties to leave the farm on pain of death.

892. That trial is to take place again; is it not?—The trial is fixed, I believe, for to-morrow. Then there is another gentleman, which makes the sixth case, who has occasionally two police with him when he goes from home; and there have been some very small farmers who have been recently threatened, who hold six or eight acres of land, and they have been continually watched by the police.

893. In their houses?—No, they have a constant system of patrol kept up day and night to protect them.

894. If they went to some distance from their homes, they would give notice to the police, I suppose?—If they were going to a distance, to a fair, they would probably call and let the police know that they would be back at such an hour, and the police would probably go to meet them.

895. Will you inform the Committee what took place upon the passing of the Peace Preservation Act?—As far as my immediate district is concerned, there has been more crime since than before.

896. During the summer?—There were six outrages in April; that was the very month in which the Act was passed; I include threatening letters in that number, and all that class of crime. In the month of June there were two cases; in the month of July, three; in the month of August there were six cases; in the month of September, four; in October, one; in the month of November there were five; there were nine in December; there were seven in the following month, January 1871; nine in February, and five in March, that is, up to the present time.

897. Is that as bad a state of things as you have ever known there?—It is worse than ever.

898. What steps did you endeavour to take upon the passing of the Peace Preservation Act?—I endeavoured to enforce it whenever an opportunity occurred.

899. Did you give any instructions to the constabulary?—Yes; my instructions to the police were to carry it out rigidly, but the people are quite equal to the Act. There were very few attacks immediately afterwards, while they were digesting it, but when they had digested it they remained at home after nightfall.

900. That must have stopped the visits of armed parties to some extent?—Yes, it did, because they were afraid to be out at night.

901. Did the threatening letters continue?—It did not affect them at all.

902. Did it affect the serious outrages?—There were no very serious outrages at that time; the most serious outrages were the firing upon the police, and the murder of Dowling, in 1870.

903. But except the firing upon the police and the murder of Dowling, there have been no very serious outrages since the passing of the Peace Preservation Act?—No, but there has been a vast deal of intimidation in the shape of threatening letter writing.

904. Have you got the figures for the last 12 months before the passing of the Peace Preservation Act?—I have, from the 4th of April 1869 to the 27th of January 1870; that is almost a year. There were 13 outrages, 18 notices posted, and 26 threatening letters; that is in the previous year as against 26 outrages, 37 threatening letters, and five notices for last year.

905. But that last year includes part of the year, and the very bad months before the Peace Preservation Act?—No, I am quoting from the 4th, the very day of the passing of the Act, and from that only, but the fact of the matter is, that in my neighbourhood they seek to make the compensation clause of the Land Act retrospective, and they think that anybody who was evicted from a farm in the bad years of 1847, 1848, and 1850, be he the tenant, or the son of the tenant, who was put out at that time, should be now compensated; that is their notion of justice.

906. Have the police in your district made any arrests under the special powers of the Peace Preservation Act?—Yes, four parties have been incarcerated under it.

907. Under what section have they been incarcerated?—Under the section which provides for people being out at night under suspicious circumstances.

908. Those parties were imprisoned by your order?—Yes, by my order, in conjunction with other magistrates sitting at the time.

909. Have any others been brought before you whom you have been unable to commit?—Very few; but under that section relating to strangers, some tramps have been brought up, but they were not fit cases to be brought before a magistrate, and I have discharged them.

910. Do you think that the provisions of the 23rd section have failed?—I think they have failed, inasmuch as the Ribbonmen meet the requirements of the Act by remaining at home.

911. Sir *G. Grey.*] That puts a stop to nocturnal outrages, does it not?—To a certain extent it does.

912. *Chairman.*] Nevertheless, although visits by armed parties have ceased to a certain extent, you still consider that the system of intimidation prevails almost, or quite as much, as formerly?—Quite as much, and I think more.

913. Have you considered what, in your opinion, would be an effectual remedy for that state of things?—I think that the only remedy that can be adopted is to get hold of the leaders and put them out of the way.

914. Do you believe that you are well acquainted with the persons in your district who are leaders?—The police know them all.

915. And do they inform you of them?—I do not require much information from them as regards that.

916. You think that you know them?—I do, well.

917. Do you know them in the same way as Captain Talbot says he recognised them by seeing them constantly in court?—Yes, by seeing them constantly in court, and I can tell them by their companions, &c.

918. You can tell their names and residences, I believe?—A great number of them.

919. And you agree with Captain Talbot that the only effectual remedy would be that of incarcerating those persons?—I cannot see any other remedy whatever.

920. Is it long since you formed that opinion?—I only declared it in 1870, but for six months previous to that I had come to the conclusion that there was nothing else for it.

921. In what way did you declare it then?—I stated it to the Government.

922. Was that a joint report made by you and Captain Talbot?—No; that was in a confidential report. I subsequently repeated that opinion in a joint report with Captain Talbot, in the summer of last year, according to my recollection.

923. Mr. *Disraeli.*] I think I collected from your evidence that crimes of violence (I include threatening letters under that general name) have increased in your district during the last two years?—In my portion of the county they have increased.

924. The case of Dowling of course you reported to the Government?—I report every outrage to the Government.

925. It is a case which is perfectly well known?—It is notorious.

926. It appeared in the newspapers, did it not?—Yes, it did.

927. I think also that the case you mentioned of firing upon the police appeared in the newspapers?—It may have done so subsequently to the assizes, but not previously, I think.

928. And you reported, as you say, all those cases specifically, but you also reported your general views with reference to the condition of the district?—Yes; I did from time to time.

929. To the Government?—Yes, to the Government.

930. And also the remedies which you considered would be efficacious?—In 1866, when there were two attempts at murder, I suggested to the Government whether it would not be a prudent thing to employ mounted constabulary in connection with the infantry constabulary.

931. But in 1870 you reported your opinion that a local repeal of the Habeas Corpus Act was the most efficacious, or the only remedy in your opinion, did you not?—In my opinion I considered that that was the only remedy.

932. All which you communicated to the Government?—I did.

933. Mr. *Bruen.*] Do you think that a magistrate, who does his duty actively, is in great danger of being shot?—I find it very hard to answer that question.

934. Do you think the Ribbon conspiracy would take cognisance of his having done his duty, and in that way come into collision with their power?—It would very much depend upon what he had done to them, so as to affect them personally.

935. And supposing that his doing of his duty had had a tendency to affect them personally, do you think that he would be in danger of their vengeance?—Do you refer to resident magistrates, or to local magistrates?

936. I should have specified the local magistrates?—I do consider it would endanger a magistrate's position, that is to say, if he took a very active part, so active a part as to tend to inconvenience them; I do consider that in that case it would be dangerous to him.

937. Do you suppose that if he did attend at the petty sessions, and took cognisance of any of the cases that were brought up at the petty sessions against the Ribbonmen, he would incur their vengeance?—No, I do not; it should be a very strong case indeed, I think, that they would revenge upon him; he would have to take a very active part, and would have to be the only magistrate who attended, but if he were acting in conjunction with others, I do not think they would visit the sin, if it might be so called, of two or three upon one head.

938. You have taken a very active part, I believe, in your district?—I hope I do my duty.

939. Have you ever been threatened?—Some years ago I received a threatening letter, and since that time I have received hints.

940. Have you received hints that your life was in danger?—I will not say that, but in a letter which I have received lately, they tell me not that my life was in danger, but that "the money was paid," and we all know what that means, and that I was to mind myself.

941. Do you think that the local magistrate incurs more danger in doing his duty in this way than the stipendiary magistrate does?—I think it is just as bad for one as the other.

942. Sir *G. Grey.*] One is connected with the land and the other is not connected with it; there would be that difference between them?—If the magistrate were directly concerned, and the land in question in any case belonged to him, he as a magistrate should not sit upon the case at all, and I do not think he would either.

943. Mr. *Bruen.*] There is an oath or an obligation in use by Ribbonmen now, is there not?—I am not aware of any.

944. Then you have never seen it?—The information tends the other way; the impression is that there is no oath, except the swearing in oath.

945. I mean the swearing in oath; the making them swear allegiance to the Ribbon Society?—Yes, there is an oath of that kind.

946. Have you ever seen a copy of that oath?—I have seen the actual oath that was found in a public house in Mullingar upon one occasion.

947. That is the one the Committee have heard about?—That is the one the Committee have heard about.

948. You know of no other?—I am quite ignorant of any other.

949. *Chairman.*] Will you inform the Committee what you referred to when you said that information led you to believe that there was no oath other than that?—We have been told by informers that there are no passwords and no signs now, and that their tactics have completely changed of late; that may or may not be true.

950. Have you any idea how one Ribbonman recognises another?—I think they all know each other;

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other; I am satisfied that they do all know each other.

951. Mr. *Bruen.*] With reference to the licenses to carry and to keep arms; can you give the Committee an idea of how many are issued in your district?—A red license gives the holder the privilege of carrying his arms either on his own farm or within a prescribed area; I think that there are about 360 of such licenses issued in my district, and about 130 or 140 black ones, which enable the proprietor to keep arms in his house.

952. Does the possession of those arms give the possessor immunity from search upon his premises?—By no means.

953. Do the police search in the houses of persons entitled to hold arms?—They are constantly searching in my district.

954. You stated to the Committee, that more outrages have been committed since the passing of the Peace Preservation Act, than before it?—That is including the threatening letters.

955. Do you think that that fact could be traced to any fear, on the part of the Ribbonmen when the Act was actually being passed in Parliament, and the discussions were going on that a more stringent Act was going to be passed than was actually passed?—I do think so, for in 1866 and 1867 there were no outrages in my district, except that there were two or three attempts to murder.

956. Sir *G. Grey.*] You mean during the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, do you not?—Just previous to, and during the suspension of, the Habeas Corpus Act.

957. Mr. *Bruen.*] In fact the Ribbonmen thought that the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act was about to be brought forward again?—They did not know what was coming; they feared it.

958. And when they found out what the Act was their fear was removed?—I should say so, certainly.

959. Mr. *Downing.*] Have you looked at the returns made to the Government with regard to agrarian crime reported by the constabulary; I refer to the printed papers?—I have had no opportunity of seeing the printed papers.

960. With reference to the crime committed in your own district in Westmeath?—I find that in the month of January 1870, there were 28 outrages in the county Westmeath; did I understand you to say that your return here was confined entirely to agrarian outrages, or was it general for sending threatening letters?—I stated that it included threatening letters.

961. I find that in the year 1870 there were 226 cases coming under the head of offences against property and against the person?—I can only speak for my own district.

962. Would you say from what you know of the district, that there is less crime in Westmeath now generally, against the person, and against property, than there was in the half-year ending with the spring assizes of 1870?—I cannot go beyond my own district, but in my own district there is undoubtedly more crime than there was.

963. Than there was in the half-year ending March 1870?—I have not divided it into half-years, but there is more crime in my district in the year 1870–71 than there was in 1869–70.

964. Have you any figures by which you can tell the amount of crime up to March 1870?—I merely ran down the heads, and I found out the total, which tells me that there were 13 outrages, 18 notices, and 26 threatening letters in 1869–70, and that there were 26 outrages, 37 letters, and five notices from April 1870 to the beginning of 1871.

965. You went away in January, so that does not include the whole year?—No.

966. Mr. *Downing.*] Have you made any calculation of the number of offences which occurred up to the March Assizes of 1870?—Yes, I have, from the 4th of April 1869.

967. To March 1870?—No, to January 1870, I have. I was away then on duty in Mayo; there were 13 outrages, 18 threatening notices, and 26 threatening letters; that was from the 4th of April 1869 to the 27th of January 1870.

968. Can you tell the Committee how many occurred from the month of January to the 4th of April?—No, I could not tell that, but I remember that there were two parties fired at while I was away.

969. Do not you know, and believe, that crime has been less, though there may have been one or two aggravated cases in the period of 1870 to 1871, than during the period which you have just given?—No, not in my own district.

970. But does that remark apply to the whole county?—I have no means of knowing what it was in the whole county.

971. Mr. *Pemberton.*] I should like to ask whether you see any trace of the religious element in this Ribbon conspiracy, whether those attacked belong more to one religion than the other?—No, I think that they are quite impartial in that way.

972. I think you made use of the expression, that you had been told that the money was paid in respect of yourself?—That was written to me. I was told to take care of myself.

973. Do you think that money is actually paid to the person who is to commit the crime?—I have no doubt that what they wanted to convey to me was that the money was paid for my assassination.

974. Mr. *Russell Gurney.*] Have you detectives connected with your constabulary force?—There are men in the constabulary force who can be made use of for detective purposes, although they are not absolutely detectives.

975. But you have not any body of men such as our detective force, have you?—They have in Dublin.

976. Have any of those people been sent down to Westmeath?—Indeed, they have, from time to time.

977. During the last 12 months, have you had any of them sent down?—Not to my knowledge.

978. Are those detectives you spoke of drilled men?—Men have come down from time to time who were drilled men, and I have heard the country people say that you ought not to drill the detectives.

979. As they are at once known as policemen?—Yes, the moment they arrive in a country village, the people say, "Who is that?" The country people are better detectives than they are.

980. You have not any of the ordinary detectives in Westmeath, such as we have in this country, have you?—They have been employed from time to time.

981. But not within the last year?—Not that I am aware of within the last 12 months.

982. Do you not think that it is a desirable thing

thing to have them?—I tried it from year to year, and I never found it of the slightest use. A man comes down, and even if he is disguised as a pedlar, &c., the people find him out directly; he is immediately known to be a stranger to the county. The Westmeath people are uncommonly sharp.

983. Mr. *Plunket.*] The longer the leaders of this system are at large the more complete becomes the system of intimidation, does it not?—I should say that the system of intimidation in Westmeath at the present moment is quite complete.

984. Do you consider that it is spreading amongst the people?—Do you mean by that question to ask me whether more people are joining the society?

985. That is what I mean?—I cannot say.

986. Are you of opinion that they are coming more under its influence?—I am satisfied that they are.

987. Do you think that that would account to some extent for their giving up the use of signs and passwords?—I cannot assign any reason for their doing so.

988. Mr. *Gregory.*] Have you any reason to think that emissaries from Ribbon lodges have penetrated to other countries?—I have heard that while I was in Mayo men came up from Tipperary to Westmeath, but I attach no importance to that.

989. As regards the 15th section of the Act, have you found that the working of it is a serious impediment in the way of searching for threatening letters, inasmuch as the house to be searched must be in the ownership of the writer of the threatening letter; you state how you would be prevented from searching if those documents were not in the handwriting of the person having, as the Act says, control of the house?—There is no doubt that unless the party suspected of having written the letter is the owner of the house, you have no right to search the house under that Act; for instance, in the case of a servant having written the letter.

990. Have there been many informations taken under that section?—There was only one information lodged before me in connection with that particular section to which you have referred, and that was in the case of Dowling. The police were quite aware that the man whose house was to be searched was a very litigious character, and they thought it better to be armed with a warrant, and merely search the house under that warrant.

991. Have there been any cases in which an action was brought against a magistrate for causing such a search to be made?—There was an action brought against Mr. Moroney, a resident magistrate in Mayo, for giving a warrant.

992. What was the result of that?—The result was that he was mulcted in 200 *l.* damages and costs.

993. It might constantly happen that the owner or the person having control over the house, might be unable to read and write, and that his son might be the writer, and yet you could not search the house?—We are able to search the house in the way I have described to you, but not under that section of that Act.

994. Suppose you were living in a district that was not proclaimed, and you wanted to search for threatening letters, how would you act?—I could not act under that Act of Parliament at all in a district that was not proclaimed.

995. You would be prevented from doing so, solely by this particular wording, that the handwriting must be that of the owner or person having control over the house?—I should be entirely precluded by the fact that that Act would not apply to the district that I was living in.

996. Mr. *James.*] I gather from what you said that you did obtain some information from Ribbonmen?—Yes; the constabulary obtained it.

997. Has that amount of information been upon the increase or otherwise, of late years?—The moment we got one informer we got two more.

998. Do you find that they are obtaining more information from people generally, or that the increase is quite accidental?—It is quite an accidental increase.

999. Did you find during the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act that there was more information given to you?—There was no information given at all in those days; there was very little crime to give information about.

1000. Probably you would not know what information was given in the other districts during the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act?—I do not exactly.

1001. You seem to have joined in the recommendation of Captain Talbot in April 1870, with reference to the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act; was that a joint report of yours and his?—No; that was my own report.

1002. I understood you to say that you joined with him in reporting?—I did, in the summer subsequently.

1003. After April 1870?—After the first report in April 1870, I with Captain Talbot made a joint report to the Government.

1004. You joined with him in reporting that there should be a system of watching, and that there was a feeling that there should be a suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act?—We did not suggest that to the Government as a prudent thing to do, but we threw it out for them to consider whether it was a thing worth adopting or not; it was no suggestion upon our part.

1005. Were you aware that Captain Talbot had reported that the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act was a strong measure, and one which he could not dare to hope would be applied?—Yes, I was aware of that.

1006. Did you join in that?—I do not know that I conveyed that by the report to the Government, but I entirely concurred in it.

1007. Were you aware of the opinion which General Wetherall has expressed?—I was.

1008. And you concurred in that report in the opinion Captain Talbot had expressed?—I think it was sometime previously that he stated that to be his opinion.

1009. Did you know of Captain Talbot's report in 1869?—I do not think that I read it.

1010. I suppose you were aware that it was a very extreme course to take?—I remember talking it over with Captain Talbot at the time that he made that report to his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant, and I told him at the time we spoke of it, that I did not consider the House of Commons would grant such a measure.

1011. You were aware that it was a thing without precedent at the time?—I never heard of its before being so applied.

1012. Mr. Serjeant *Sherlock.*] You have been

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asked about the magistrates doing their duty; do you know of any instances in which a resident or local magistrate has suffered, either in person or property, from doing his duty as a magistrate?—No, I do not.

1013. With regard to those letters you have produced, which appear to be emanating from the same neighbourhood, have you got any information as distinguished from evidence with reference to the authors of those letters?—We did very recently.

1014. Was it reliable information, so far as you could judge?—I thought that the information was reliable, but we acted upon that information, and the result was a failure.

1015. Mr. *Maguire.*] I wish you would be so good as to explain to the Committee what was the nature of the suggestion which you made to the Government with reference to watching?—That is the suggestion which Captain Talbot stated just now, namely, to have a hut brought down to the spot.

1016. Do you mean to say that you both made the suggestion that a hut should be placed upon one particular spot?—That was the suggestion thrown out; we did not convey that with the idea of leading the Government to think that it would do any good, but failing any other measure, we thought that that might be adopted.

1017. Do you mean to say that crime is so concentrated in one locality, and that the placing of the police in that iron hut would enable you to detect it?—There is no doubt that the great lever of the whole of the crime of the county was situated in that immediate district; and that was the object we had in view.

1018. You have been asked by the learned Recorder about the detective force; is it a very wise thing, if you wish to have your detectives effectually disguised, to have your detectives drilled so as to give them that upright character, which they can never get rid of?—I think the more disguised a policeman can make himself in order to be a detective the better.

1019. And I daresay you would be of opinion that it would be as hard to disguise a policeman as a soldier?—I think it is harder.

1020. Do you not think that it would be a great advantage to have detectives of such a character, that the people would not know them at once?—I think not as far as Ribbonism goes; they would know them any way.

1021. Do you think that a military organisation is the right organisation to deal with a secret confederacy?—No, I do not think that.

1022. Is not the present constabulary a military organisation?—But I do not think that they are at all equal to the emergency.

1023. Assuming that Parliament would not carry out your ideas with reference to the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, what means would you suggest as those which would be successful in coping with them?—I could not suggest any other course.

1024. Therefore you would merely confine it to the ordinary policeman with his rifle and his belt?—That is the ordinary state of things that exists; I cannot suggest any improvement other than what I have stated.

1025. Are there many magistrates in the county who attend the sessions?—I am very fortunate in my district; there is a very good attendance of magistrates.

1026. And they are not afraid of attending sessions?—They are not afraid of attending the sessions.

1027. Is there any danger to the magistrates in so doing?—I would not say that. As I stated before, it depends upon how hard he hits these fellows.

1028. Do you not think that one magistrate would support another, so that he should not deal alone with those cases?—I do; I think that the fact of a number of magistrates sitting on the bench would make a great difference. I do not think that they would like to shoot the whole of them.

1029. Do you think that it would be a very unwise thing to leave the bench with only one magistrate upon it. Delvin was the case that was stated?—Most undoubtedly; it is improper that it should be so, because one magistrate cannot legally deal with all the cases that are brought before him.

1030. If there is only one magistrate, or no magistrate at all sometimes, would it not be wise to increase the number?—Certainly, if you get efficient magistrates it would.

1031. With reference to juries, you stated that one case was brought to trial, and that you obtained a conviction; that was some time since, was it not?—Yes, about two years ago; that was a threatening letter case.

1032. What was the character of the jury?—It was a very fair jury.

1033. The evidence was given, and they found a verdict?—Yes.

1034. In this case of firing at a policeman, you had evidence, had you not?—Yes, ample evidence.

1035. The jury convicted?—It would have been very difficult for them not to have done so, because the sub-inspector of police got hold of the man, and stuck to him until the rest came up.

1036. Did you have evidence?—Yes, we had evidence of that.

1037. In case there might be an apprehension that the jury could not be trusted, you know that the Attorney General under the Act has the power of removing the case to any other county?—Yes.

1038. That then is also a formidable weapon in his hands, is it not?—Yes; I suppose that depends upon where the venue is changed to.

1039. The court exercise that discretion, does it not?—Yes.

1039*. The judge goes to one place one year, and to another place another year, so that he must know the state of the country very well, must he not?—Yes.

1040. And you would not be afraid to leave that to the judge, or to the discretion of the Attorney General?—Certainly not, so far as I am concerned.

1041. Colonel *Wilson Patten.*] Do you believe that if the Government were to try to put down the system of Ribbonism in your district by process of law at the present moment, they could get any evidence that would be of any service to them?—By what process of law?

1042. By any process of the existing law, do you think that they could get any information that would be of service to them?—I do not think that there is any existing law that can touch Ribbonism at all.

1043. But supposing that they were to have a suspicion that there was an unlawful proceeding going on at any house, do you believe that any

any person who was aware of the proceedings going on in that house dare give evidence in a court of justice with reference to the nature of those proceedings?—There is no doubt about it; they dare not.

1044. And that is the reason why you think that we must have an alteration of the law before you can put down this society?—I am perfectly satisfied that the existing law is entirely unable to cope with the society.

1045. You heard the evidence of Captain Talbot with regard to the alteration which has taken place in the organisation of the system; do you agree with him that the organisation of the system is different from what it used to be?—I have reason to believe that there have been several changes of late, and that now the parties are not threatened whom they intend to shoot, and that the process is to shoot them dead, upon the principle that dead men tell no tales.

1046. You are of opinion that the former system varied from the present system only in this particular, that there was a sort of trial which took place formerly which does not take place now?—I have always understood so, but I do not know it of my own knowledge.

1047. Perhaps you could not state of your own knowledge also that the only punishment awarded by Ribbonism at all times has been the sentence of death?—It depends upon what the party has been doing. If a man was guilty of a gross act of injustice to a tenant, and a jury of Ribbonmen sat upon him, he would be shot dead.

1048. *Chairman.*] But sometimes a beating is given, is it not?—Certainly; they mete out the punishment according to the aggravation.

1049. Mr. *Solicitor General for Ireland.*] Are you aware that some years ago the law in Ireland was, that if a man shot at another, with intent to murder him, that was a capital felony?—Yes.

1050. And that there was a change made in the law in that respect?—Yes, a change was made.

1051. Do you consider that that change was advantageous, or disadvantageous?—It was a disadvantageous change; the reason that I say that is, that the intention of the man who fires at you, and happens to miss you, is exactly the same, whether he hits you or not: it is just the hand of Providence which interferes in the latter case.

1052. Have you heard that very often in committing outrages, an attempt has been made to injure a man, and not to kill him?—Yes, I have heard that from an informer, in one instance; and Captain Talbot alluded to it in the case of Welsh, in which the men were told to hit him, and not to kill him; as they called it, "to give him some;" that "giving him some" merely meant to show that they wished to get him out of the farm by giving him some punishment.

1053. You have stated your opinion that the Peace Preservation Act has been thoroughly worked?—It has been vigorously and thoroughly worked.

1054. And that all the force has been given to the clauses of the Act of which they would admit?—Yes, I know that.

1055. And that there has been no hanging back upon the part of the magistrates and justices?—There has been no hanging back; the law has been fairly and justly administered by the magistrates.

1056. What is the size of your district?—I should say that from north to south it is about eight miles, and from east to west I should say it is about 17 or 18.

1057. How many petty sessions courts are there in that district?—I have only three.

1058. Are they well attended by the local magistrates, as a rule?—Two of them are always well attended.

1059. You stated that there was terrorism and intimidation used to prevent evidence from being given; can you state whether that terrorism or intimidation has ever affected the local gentry in the way of doing their duty, to your knowledge?—I cannot say whether the local gentry have been prevented by terrorism or intimidation from doing their duty.

1060. Have you heard anything about blackmail being paid by the local gentry?—I have heard what Captain Talbot has described, and I have myself seen money paid.

1061. What money?—The half-crowns I have seen paid.

1062. That is to say, the subscription, I presume?—Yes, the subscription for the general expenses of the body to meet fines imposed, &c.

1063. But do you know anything about whether the gentry have paid it; whether they pay anything for protection?—No, I cannot say that; the only thing I know is, that a gentleman has found recently, after the lapse of 17 or 18 years, that it was a reasonable thing to pay a man compensation for a farm from which his father had been evicted 17 or 18 years before.

1064. That was a conclusion, I presume, to which he was brought by a threatening letter?—Certainly; he could have come to that conclusion by no other means, I think.

1065. Let me ask you another question with regard to the money which you say you saw collected; where did you see that money collected?—I saw it handed about from hand to hand in the market.

1066. And you had reason to believe that the persons collecting this money were persons who were connected with Ribbon organisation?—I was quite certain of it.

1067. Did you come to that conclusion from knowing them?—I could not have come to that conclusion if I had not known them.

1068. How long have you been in the district?—Between seven and eight years.

1069. Have you been cognizant of the Ribbon organisation existing there all that time?—I was not cognizant of the leaders of it for the first three months, but with that exception I have been cognizant of the leading Ribbonmen all the time.

1070. You state that you never heard of any injury being done to a resident or local magistrate; have you ever heard that attorneys practising at the sessions have lately refused to take proceedings against persons who were said to be members of the Ribbon organisation?—I have never heard of that.

1071. Have you ever heard whether legal gentlemen, whether members of the attorney profession or not, have refused to be connected with cases where Ribbonmen were concerned?—I have never heard of legal men being intimidated at all.

1072. You gave some evidence with regard to the police; you stated that you did not think the police were equal to the emergency?—I did.

1073. You did not mean to say that any other police, or police trained in any different way, would

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would have been more equal to the emergency?—I consider the constabulary to be as efficient a body as you could have.

1074. I did not understand you to state that their military training had impaired their efficiency?—They are quite able to do their duty if they were only told to do so and so.

1075. They have the local knowledge?—They have all the local knowledge that they can require.

1076. Supposing they were more untrained men, and a body more like the parish constabulary in England, do you think they would be a more efficient body?—I do not think they would be of any use at all in that case.

1077. Therefore, I may take it, that you think their training is necessary?—It is absolutely necessary.

1078. Do you know that detectives have been sent down into Westmeath within the last 12 months who were not drilled men?—I do not know that there were, but I suspected people that I have seen.

1079. Have you seen men whom you suspected to be detectives?—Yes.

1080. Although they were not drilled men?—It was the very fact of their having been partly drilled that led me to suspect that some of them were detectives.

1081. Are you certain that they were those detectives?—I do not know whether I was right in my suspicions or not, but I believed that they were detectives.

1082. You compared the year 1869-70, with the year 1870-71?—I did.

1083. You stated that there was more crime in 1870-71, than there had been in 1869-70, did you not?—I did.

1084. But in 1869-70, you omitted 2½ months of the year?—I did

1085. During which you were away from Mayo?—Yes, I was in Mayo on special duty.

1086. During the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, you say that there was less crime in Westmeath than previously?—There was hardly any crime during that time.

1087. Do you not think that Fenianism at that time engrossed more of the ideas of the people than Ribbonism?—I am quite sure that Fenianism at that time engrossed the whole of their ideas, and Fenianism became engrafted upon Ribbonism.

1088. Fenianism, you say, engrossed the whole of their ideas, and that then there was a partial suspension of Ribbonism?—Yes, the Ribbonmen became Fenians; they knew we had powers to take them up under the law as Fenians.

1089. The Ribbonman merged into the Fenian, you say?—He did for his own purposes, in order to get arms, and for other purposes.

1090. When Fenianism was somewhat cowed, is it not the case that successful Ribbonism revived again directly?—It did.

1091. Do you agree with the evidence Captain Talbot gave with reference to the existence of this conspiracy in the neighbouring counties?—From what I believe, and from what I have heard, I believe that it exists in Meath and Westmeath, and a portion of Longford and Kings.

1092. At all events, you believe that conspiracy exists in the counties of Meath, Westmeath, and King's County?—I do.

1093. Do you agree with Captain Talbot's evidence that the society is not only agrarian, but is, to a certain extent, social in its operation?—Since the last few years it has descended from its former character of dealing with land matters, and is now extended to all matters of grievance.

1094. With reference to the extent of this conspiracy, does it extend to the whole rural population?—It extends over the whole county, but I should say that it does not embrace the whole rural population.

1095. Does it embrace any portion of the small traders in the towns?—I should not think that Ribbonism does embrace many of the traders in the towns, except a few of the publicans.

1096. The effect of this conspiracy is to cause intimidation and terror in the way you have described?—Exactly.

1097. Mr. *Chichester Fortescue.*] I wish to ask you a question about the detectives to whom you have referred; do you think it would be possible to do more than is done already in the way of obtaining local detectives, persons who know the county, and people who would act as detectives?—It would be a service of such danger that I am perfectly satisfied no one would attempt it.

1098. You do not think that more could be done in that direction than is done already by the efforts of the police and the occasional procuring of private information?—I do not think there could.

1099. So much for local detectives; now do you think that anything more could be done by bringing in strangers to act as detectives in the district?—No; a detective told me, about two years ago, that everything they had tried in the shape of disguise and going about amongst the people had been worked threadbare; that was the expression a detective made use of to me.

1100. I wish to ask you about a few figures; this is a return of all offences committed in the county of Westmeath since the summer assizes of 1869, down to the spring assizes of 1870?—There are 173 at the foot of the first column since the last assizes.

1101. That is the total number of offences between the summer assizes of 1869 and the spring assizes of 1870?—Yes, actually committed.

1102. Now will you look at page 16; that is a return of the number of the same offences in the same county of Westmeath from the summer assizes of 1870 to March 1871; what is the figure at the foot of the first column?—Eighty-nine, but it does not say up to what date.

1103. The date of the letter is March, is it not?—The 18th of March 1871.

1104. Now will you look at these two returns (*handing the same to the Witness*). Those were the general returns reported by the constabulary in the years 1869 and 1870 respectively. Now will you look at the Westmeath column?—I am perfectly confident that crime has increased within the last year in my own district. I may mention that my district is an exceedingly bad one.

1105. Is it the worst in the county?—It always has been; that and Mullingar town.

1106. Sir *G. Grey.*] You have not had charge of Captain Talbot's district since he left it in October, I believe?—Not since he left it.

1107. In what number of cases has the power of closing public-houses at night, under the 24th section of the Peace Preservation Act, been acted upon in your district?—There are only two public-houses that the Lord Lieutenant has closed in my district, and those are isolated houses in the rural districts.

1108. Have

1108. Have you not thought it expedient that the power should be exercised with regard to the other public-houses?—No, I do not think it would be any check upon Ribbonism that they should be closed; if they were in a public-house at night it would be well known to the police, and when they came out it would be the duty of the police to arrest every one of those persons for being out at night.

1109. Is it the case that meetings of Ribbonmen do not take place at public-houses at night now?—In my district they do not.

1110. Have there been many summary convictions under the 26th section of the Act, which gives the power of summary conviction for offences of various characters?—No, there have been no cases dealt with under that section; there have been four cases of parties out at night.

1111. What is your opinion of the police tax that is placed upon a district where an outrage has been committed?—I think it presses most unequally upon the community; it does a great deal of harm; it alienates friends, and does not hit the people who ought to be hit, or whom the law would endeavour to hit, as being instrumental in the commission of crime.

1112. Do you agree with the opinion that Captain Talbot has expressed that it was an unequal tax?—I have had the opinion for years that it was an unequal and an unjust tax.

1113. *Chairman.*] Are you of opinion that it is of no use in the way of producing evidence?—It quite shuts out all evidence; any person who had evidence to give would certainly reserve it under the influence of this tax.

1114. Sir *G. Grey.*] If it led to the detection of crime and the taking away of the police and the consequent reduction of the police tax, how would the imposition of the tax prevent the giving of evidence?—It would appear that there was a desire upon the part of the persons affected by the tax to get rid of it?—There would be, most certainly, that desire upon their part.

1115. The tax might produce a desire to give evidence on the part of a witness, but it does not overcome his terror of results?—No; and more than that I consider that it does a great deal of harm when a man, who is a loyal man and a good subject has to pay, say 30*l.* a year, for an extra police force when he is in no way concerned with the crime which occasioned the imposition of the tax.

1116. Mr. *Russell Gurney.*] But are there not a great many persons who pay the tax who are in a position to give some information if they were not affected by the terror of Ribbonism?—I do not think there are a great many.

1117. Are not there cases in which it is generally known throughout the whole district who the persons are who committed the offence?—It may be generally known throughout a district who are the assassins, but the person who has that knowledge could never come forward and prove it in a court of justice.

1118. Is it not necessary if there is to be an extra tax for the police that it should be paid by the district where it became necessary, rather than by the country generally?—No; because one ruffian may happen to live in a certain district, I do not see why the whole district should be charged, a great many of the people in the district could not give information, and moreover are exceedingly poor people.

1119. *Chairman.*] Do you not believe that a considerable number of those people upon whom the tax presses hardly have no sympathy with the conspiracy, and if they would come forward could give the police considerable assistance?—There may be some people who may know who the parties are who commit an outrage, and who could give information to the police, but that would not be such information as you could use.

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1120. Is it not your opinion that, besides the people who are connected with the Ribbon society and who are sympathisers with it, there are a large number of people who though they are not connected with it will give the police no information whatever?—If they are respectable people they have no information to give.

1121. Is that your opinion?—I think that there are a large number of respectable farmers in Westmeath who have no means at all of giving information.

1122. Do you think that they take any means to be able to give information?—No, they would not do so.

1123. Is it not the case that if they would act with a little courage they might assist the police to such an extent as to put the conspiracy down?—I do not think they would be able to put the conspiracy down. That they might aid the authorities there is very little doubt.

1124. Sir *G. Grey.*] Are they people who could use any influence in putting an end to this conspiracy?—When a man's own clergyman can exercise no influence upon him I think it is a hopeless case.

1125. Have you known any case in which parties near the spot have given any assistance to the police in the apprehension of a man guilty of a serious outrage?—No, none has come under my notice.

1126. Colonel *W. Patten.*] Do you agree with Captain Talbot that the imposition of this tax has had no effect whatever in checking crime in your district in Ireland?—In every case that has come under my notice it has had no good effect whatever in that way.

1127. The *Solicitor General for Ireland.*] Do you think if the population of Westmeath, free from intimidation and influenced by terror, were to act with the Government they could put down these conspiracies?—They could not act free, because intimidation rules the county.

1128. But, after all, the intimidators are the minority?—Be it so, but they are the strongest. I could not even say that they are in a large minority. I could not even say that, if you polled Westmeath to-morrow, the Ribbonmen would be in the minority, but I am quite satisfied that they are the strongest.

1129. You judge by the effects?—Yes.

1130. Mr. *Hardy.*] They practically govern the county?—Yes, they practically govern the county.

1131. And there is no law that can cope with them?—None whatever.

1132. Mr. *James.*] Do you think it would be an effectual remedy, after a person is arrested under the Lord Lieutenant's warrant, that he should be placed for a certain period under the surveillance of the police?—Supposing the Act to be suspended, all you would have to intimate to that man would be this, if an outrage is perpetrated in the county when you go out, you will go in again.

1133. But I mean that a man should be

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placed under the observation of the police, as men in England, who have once been convicted, are placed under the observation of the police? —But there is that power at the present moment. Every one of these men is under the surveillance of the police, and has been so for years. The police have the power to enter any man's house at any hour of the day or the night in that district of Westmeath which is proclaimed.

1134. But it must be specifically to search for arms, and any man who was not likely to be searched would be safe, would he not?—No, he would not be safe, as the police could use their discretion about that.

1135. Mr. *Maguire.*] Have the police constantly made such searches in the houses of the leaders of the confederacy?—Yes, constantly; since the time that that man Dowling was murdered one man's house has been frequently searched night and day.

1136. How many leaders would you say that there were in your district?—If you confine the thing entirely to my district there are several.

1137. Should you say that there are 10 or 20? —There are men who live very near the border of my district that I do not include.

1138. But of the men within your district would there be half a dozen or a dozen?—There are a dozen men who could get anything done in the way of the society that they wished.

1139. Have you searched the houses of all those men constantly?—No, I could not say the houses of all those men, because those men, as far as I know, have done nothing at all to warrant our searching their individual houses.

1140. And yet you consider that they are the heads of all those Ribbon outrages?—Yes; a man may be a leading member, and yet be perfectly peaceable for years, and if you did search his house you would find there was nothing at all in it except what there ought to be in it; that has been the result of our searches.

1141. Do you know Mr. Seed?—He is in the neighbouring county of Meath.

1142. The *Solicitor General for Ireland.*] Is it not the fact that the police have not a general power of going into any man's house and searching?—The Lord Lieutenant's warrant empowers the police to do so.

1143. The 13th section of the Crime and Outrage Act empowers the Lord Lieutenant to issue a warrant to search for arms in proclaimed districts; and then the 14th section is repealed by the 10th section of the Peace Preservation Act, which says that, "It shall be lawful for any person to whom any warrant to search for and seize arms in any proclaimed district is directed, under the provisions of section 13 of the principal Act, and for constables and other persons acting in their aid or assistance, within the space of three months next after the date of such warrant, to enter, &c.?—Yes; but that is the Lord Lieutenant's warrant, which every sub-inspector of a district has.

1144. Is that a general warrant?—Yes, to go into any man's house night or day.

1145. Mr. *Russell Gurney.*] You said that if a landlord was guilty of gross injustice he was shot: do you mean to confine that to cases where a landlord has been guilty of gross injustice?—I believe myself that the object of the Ribbon Society is to administer what they consider justice to men who cannot get it in any other way.

1146. What they consider justice?—I do believe that most firmly.

1147. If a landlord evicts a tenant for non-payment of rent, is that what the Ribbonmen would consider injustice?—There is no doubt that hitherto that was not considered an injustice; a man would go out and not a word would be said in his favour by any man in the county, but I think that that state of things has changed since Fenianism has become engrafted upon Ribbonism.

1148. You do not mean what other honest men when affected would consider an injustice? —No; but Ribbonmen are capable of forming a very good opinion of things in general.

1149. Mr. *Plunket.*] But surely it is not only the landlords who are shot?—No; there was the case of Dowling; in my opinion Ribbonism is mixed up with Fenianism, and that has altered its character very much.

1150. Viscount *Sandon.*] Are you of opinion, with Captain Talbot, that there are many valuable witnesses who could throw great light upon this inquiry, who would be unable to come here without danger to their lives?—Any person who knew a great deal about Ribbonism, and came over and told it to you and went back to Westmeath would be in danger of his life, I think.

1151. And would there be any difference in our receiving his evidence without its being in this public way, or receiving it privately?—That is a question between the Committee and the witness.

1152. I mean as regarded the danger to the safety of the witness?—Speaking for myself, I would rather come over here and give all my evidence publicly, than let it leak out, in part only, as it probably would do or get into the papers in a garbled state, and let the Ribbonmen say, "That fellow told the Committee a great deal more than we can see in the public prints."

1153. Is it your opinion that the evidence which we should obtain from those parties would be of such a character as we could not obtain from the gentlemen who are present, or from those who will come afterwards?—I cannot speak with reference to those who are coming, but I should think that anybody coming to speak to Ribbonism in Westmeath would tell the Committee very much what we have told them.

1154. But if you are informed that they have it in their power to give very special information, what would you say?—I could not form an opinion as to what they may know; they may have men in their pay.

1155. Mr. *Downing.*] Suppose a gentleman came over from Westmeath, whether his evidence was reported or not, do you not believe that the fact of his coming over as a witness would be perfectly well known in the county?—I could not say that, but I may say that I came across a Westmeath man when I was coming here to-day, and I asked him if he was coming to give evidence, and he said that he was not, but he will get the credit of it all the same over in Westmeath, whether he did or did not, if it is known he is here.

Captain WILLIAM FITZJAMES BARRY, is called in; and Examined.

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1156. *Chairman.*] WILL you inform the Committee how long you have been a Magistrate?—I was appointed to Westmeath in November 1870.

1157. Did you act as a magistrate first in Westmeath?—No, I was originally appointed in August 1857.

1158. Will you inform the Committee in what counties you have served?—I have served in Mayo twice, and in the counties of Waterford and Roscommon, and now in Westmeath.

1159. Did you succeed Captain Talbot?—Yes.

1160. And you have now charge of the same district as Captain Talbot had?—The same.

1161. You heard Captain Talbot in evidence, which he gave the Committee of what took place up to the time of his leaving the district?—Yes.

1162. How would you describe the state of things in that district since Captain Talbot left?—During the period since Captain Talbot left the district crime has been less, but of a more serious character than during the corresponding period of the previous year. There has been one very bad murder, the murder of Mr. Waters, and some other serious outrages.

1163. But the number of offences has diminished?—Yes.

1164. Have you any reason for attributing that to any particular cause?—No, to no cause in particular.

1165. Have the provisions of the Peace Preservation Act been put in force?—Fully.

1166. What provisions have you been able to act upon?—The 23rd section has been fully put into operation in reference to the arrest of persons found out at night under suspicious circumstances.

1167. Do you recollect how many have been arrested and committed in your district?—There have been but two committals since my acquaintance with the district; there have been several arrests.

1168. And in the case where arrests have been made and committals have not followed, what was deficient in the case?—The circumstances were detailed by the constabulary, and on examination of the accused they were not of that suspicious character to justify the magistrates in a conviction.

1169. Were you present when those cases were heard?—I speak altogether from my personal experience of the cases that have been brought before myself.

1170. Do you consider that evidence of their being out on some mischief is required in order to enable you to commit a person under that section?—Yes, decidedly I do; there must be evidence to prove the suspicious circumstances which are alleged.

1171. Supposing that the police bring up a man found out at night without being able to give any satisfactory account of himself, do you consider that you would be warranted in convicting him?—I should consider it then a case for conviction.

1172. But, in fact, as a general rule, they have a plausible or more or less satisfactory story to tell, have they not?—They have generally accounted to my satisfaction in the cases that have come before me, and I have not convicted them.

1173. Have any other provisions been put in force?—Yes; all the public-houses in the rural districts in my district have been closed after sunset.

1174. With any good effect?—I think one very good effect has been that it has prevented parties being out at night, and from assembling at unseasonable hours in public-houses, where generally most of the mischief is concocted.

1175. Is it to the action which has been taken under the Peace Preservation Act that you attribute a diminution of crime in your district?—No, I cannot attribute it to the operation of the Peace Preservation Act; it is probably owing more to what I should conceive to be the absence of cause among those who are the perpetrators of crime.

1176. Do you consider that a state of intimidation exists?—Decidedly, wide-spread intimidation.

1177. And do you think that perhaps that is the reason why actual outrages are not required?—I think that that is one of the reasons, and that the feeling of intimidation pervades all classes of society.

1178. Have threatening letters been frequent during the past year?—Not very frequent in my district; during that period there have been some.

1179. What reason have you to think that intimidation is prevalent if there have not been many outrages, and if there have not been many threatening letters?—From the extreme difficulty, amounting almost to impossibility of getting evidence where crime has been committed, and from the personal alarm and terror which I know to prevail throughout the district.

1180. Are you aware of any cases in your district like those which Mr. Reade mentioned, where farms have remained unlet?—I do not know of any such cases.

1181. The most serious case which has happened since you have been in the district was the murder of Mr. Waters?—Yes.

1182. In that instance did you find a great difficulty in obtaining evidence?—There was no difficulty in obtaining evidence, but it was of a most unreliable character.

1183. Sir *G. Grey.*] Were any persons arrested?—Three were arrested.

1184. *Chairman.*] In the first instance, did you receive such information as enabled you to make any arrests?—The arrests of the three parties who were in custody for some weeks were made on suspicion on the night of the murder, and immediately on its occurrence.

1185. The police suspected the parties, did they not?—The police suspected the parties.

1186. Having those persons in custody, did you obtain any further information, tending to inculpate anybody?—Yes; but of a character which was not available.

1187. Could you describe to the Committee a little more fully what you mean by evidence of an unreliable character; was it derived from informers?—Yes; and of course very contradictory; so contradictory that it was not reliable.

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1188. You were not able to bring those persons to trial?—No; they were discharged, having been remanded for several weeks; some four or five weeks, I think.

1189. Have you any reason to suppose that this murder was perpetrated in connection with a Ribbon Society?—I have strong reason to believe that it was agrarian in its character, but that the perpetrators of the crime were Ribbonmen.

1190. What circumstances led you to form that opinion?—The murdered man, who was a process-server, had served a notice of ejectment on a person whose son was a notorious leader of the Ribbon movement, who lived in the same house with the person to be ejected, and who, in fact, was the very person who was interested in the farm. The ejectment would have been tried at the Quarter Sessions to have been held upon the 2nd of January, and the man who served the notice was murdered upon the 29th of the previous month.

1191. Mr. *Hardy.*] What was the ground of the ejectment? — The landlord proposed to equalize the rents, and the party having refused to submit was served with an ejectment notice.

1192. *Chairman.*] The party having refused to pay the increased rent was served with a notice?—The party refused to pay the increased rent and was served with a notice.

1193. Sir *G. Grey.*] Was there sworn evidence before the magistrates against the three men? — Yes, there were several informations taken by me.

1194. What sort of persons were they that gave this evidence?—Some of the inhabitants of the town and of the agricultural classes.

1195. Did they come forward voluntarily to give evidence? — Not voluntarily.

1196. Were they summoned under the 13th section of the Peace Preservation Act?—They were not summoned. I have never found it necessary to put that section of the Act into operation, inasmuch as I have invariably found that the parties, upon being asked by the constabulary or myself, have come forward and given evidence, but evidence, as I have already remarked, of an unreliable character.

1197. They give evidence knowing that they could be committed on refusing to do so?—Yes; they come on being asked.

1198. Do you think that they told all they knew?—They stated to me on oath that they did tell all they knew, but the evidence was of a very conflicting character.

1199. *Chairman.*] But did their evidence give you the impression that they knew more than they said?—In some cases.

1200. Sir *G. Grey.*] The magistrates, upon the whole, did not think the evidence sufficient to warrant them in committing the men for trial?—Certainly not.

1201. Have you found the same difficulty in obtaining reliable evidence in other cases?—We have found no difficulty in getting parties to come forward, as I have before observed; but when they have been sworn, they have either pleaded ignorance about the transaction which they were about to be examined upon, or they have contradicted each other so much that their evidence was unreliable.

1202. When the police first summon witnesses to give evidence, are any depositions taken; do they state the particulars upon which they can give evidence?—The evidence is taken by deposition.

1203. And when brought before the magistrates, does their evidence generally agree with those depositions?—They very frequently contradict themselves.

1204. *Chairman.*] You have heard the suggestions which have been made by Captain Talbot and Mr. Reade for dealing with this organisation; have you any suggestions to make to the Committee with regard to that subject?—I quite indorse the opinions generally which were expressed by Captain Talbot and Mr. Reade. My opinion is that some legislative measure more stringent than the Peace Preservation Act is indispensably necessary to preserve life and property in that district.

1205. Is the state of things which you find in Westmeath quite distinct from anything with which you have been acquainted in your other districts?—It is altogether distinct.

1206. Your other districts, including the districts of Mayo, Waterford, and Roscommon?—Yes, quite distinct.

1207. I suppose you have had many cases of agrarian outrage before you in Mayo and Roscommon?—I had several cases of an essentially agragrian character, but comparatively trivial, in Mayo; the people are constitutionally litigious, and in that respect differ altogether from the people of Westmeath. In Westmeath it is not the quantity, but it is the quality of the crime which is committed that makes it serious; the number of cases at petty sessions proves that. Perhaps the average number of cases at my petty sessions is not more that eight or nine.

1208. But agrarian murders have been committed in Mayo, have they not?—Not during my time.

1209. Have you ever been engaged in the investigation of any?—Never in Mayo.

1210. Do you think that the powers given to the constabulary by the Peace Preservation Act have been exercised to the utmost?—I am quite satisfied of it.

1211. And they have failed, in your opinion, to check the system of intimidation?—Completely.

1212. Mr. *Bruen.*] Did you make a report to the Government upon the state of your district since you came to Westmeath?—Yes, I did.

1213. And, in that report, did you make any recommendation for more stringent measures than the Peace Preservation Act provides?—I did.

1214. What date was that?—In the month of December 1870; about a month after my connection with that district.

1215. *Chairman.*] Did you succeed Captain Talbot immediately?—Captain Talbot left in October, and I came in November. I was on leave at the time when Captain Talbot left. My report was dated the 30th of December.

1216. Mr. *Bruen.*] You specified the measure which you would recommend for the preservation of order, did you not?—I did.

1217. Mr. *Downing.*] You were a magistrate before that time for some years?—I have been in the commission of the peace since 1849.

1218. Have you any reason to believe that some, at least, of those cases which are reported are not exactly genuine, and perhaps never occurred; I refer particularly to these threatening

ing letters?—I could not say that of my own knowledge.

1219. Have you heard that report?—I have heard in some very few instances in reference to threatening letters that the parties who received them had been the writers of them themselves.

1220. Are you aware of such a case as a threatening letter coming before one of the judges on circuit?—I am.

1221. Are you aware that there was a conviction for perjury at the last Cavan Assizes, against a party who swore that he was attacked at night, and had had shots fired at him?—Yes.

1222. Then many of those cases which have been reported may really have had no existence whatever?—It is possible.

1223. You were in the county of Mayo for some years, were you not?—Yes, over five years, at different periods and at different places.

1224. Were you there when the levies were made for extra police?—I was not.

1225. You have heard the evidence of Captain Talbot and Mr. Reed upon that point, as to whether that system has increased or failed to detect crime?—I quite indorse what they have said; that it has failed completely in detecting crime or in obtaining information, and that it has been that obnoxious tax which has alienated the feelings of the well-disposed, who would have been otherwise disposed to give information.

1226. You have resided in the county of Cork, have you not?—Yes.

1227. And you are a landed proprietor there?—Yes.

1228. And mix a good deal with the people?—Yes.

1229. Do you find that the state of the people in Westmeath is very wretched?—Yes, very distressing indeed; to which I attribute a great deal of the crime.

1230. Are you of opinion that the Land Bill which was passed has tended very much, and will tend very much, to the peace of the country?—As regards the labouring class, it has in no way ameliorated their condition, but has only dispelled the hope they had entertained of being bettered by it.

1231. Are you of opinion that if the labouring population of Westmeath had better houses, better pay, and better employment, their character might be beneficially affected?—As a remedial measure, I think that nothing would tend more to repress crime.

1232. Viscount *Sandon.*] Am I correct in understanding that it is your belief that we should have very many more outrages in Westmeath if the system of terrorism had not so completely succeeded, that nobody can now act contrary to the Ribbon leaders?—I should say so.

1233. Would it be correct to say that all freedom of action is at this moment at an end in Westmeath?—Decidedly.

1234. So that between buyers and sellers, masters and servants, employers and employed, freedom of action is at an end?—Decidedly; parties are not free agents to act as they wish.

1235. Does that apply to the town as well as to the country?—To all parts of my district.

1236. Should you be apprehensive that, supposing the Habeas Corpus Act was suspended merely locally, we might see Ribbonism burst out in some other perfectly distinct part of the country?—I do not think there is any danger to be apprehended of that. Ribbonism has become a chronic disease, and I think is principally confined to Westmeath, so that I do not think there would be any danger of what you suggest.

1237. You told the Committee that it is possible that a great many of those reported outrages may have been no outrages at all; do you believe that that is the case in any large number?—Certainly not, in the large majority those cases are exceptional.

1238. Do you agree with Captain Talbot that, in many instances, there is no report of threatening letters having been sent, that is to say, that they are sent without its coming to the knowledge of the police?—Decidedly, there are cases in which the parties consider it to be discreet to say nothing about them.

1239. Mr. Serjeant *Sherlock.*] With regard to the murder of Mr. Waters, did you investigate the circumstances?—I did very fully, and on different occasions.

1240. Are you aware that the deceased man had a conversation with the police on the same afternoon that he was murdered?—I am quite aware of it.

1241. And that he detailed to them a conversation which he had had with a man who had been in his company the greater portion of the day?—Yes.

1242. And the police offered to escort him home, and he declined the escort?—He was desired not to leave that evening without calling at the barracks to obtain an escort.

1243. I believe he pointed out a person who had spoken to him, and complained that he was followed by two other men?—Yes, and he expressed his great surprise at the intimacy these men showed with him.

1244. If that conversation with the police had been capable of being given in evidence it would have led, in your opinion, to a moral certainty of these persons being apprehended?—I think so.

1245. I find it has been stated that this notorious Ribbonman refused to pay an increased rent; are you aware that he did offer to pay an increased rent?—I am not aware of that fact.

1246. Mr. *Maguire.*] In your opinion, would not the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, even locally, be a very extreme measure?—A very extreme measure.

1247. From your knowledge of the country you do not believe that Ribbonism extends beyond the county of Westmeath?—My belief is that Ribbonism is confined to the county of Westmeath.

1248. Therefore that power, if exercised by the Government, should be strictly limited to the district in which you say it exists?—Certainly.

1249. Will you give the Committee an idea of the wages a labourer has in your district?—I think the agricultural labourer gets about 10*d.* a day.

1250. Is not that a very low rate?—I think it is a very low rate.

1251. The market prices have increased for all the necessaries of life; have they not?—Yes, they have.

1252. Do they pay rent for their cottages?—They pay a rent exclusively of that.

1253. And they get nothing for their labour, except the 10*d.* a day?—I think not.

1254. Taking all these matters into consideration with your knowledge of the country, is not

Captain *W. Barry.*

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10*d.* a day now very nearly as little as 6*d.* a day would have been 20 years ago, owing to the increased price of provisions?—I should say about that.

1255. Therefore absolutely the rate of wages is miserably low; is it not?—So far as I have been able to ascertain, it is.

1256. Is that the rate of wages in that district alone, or does that embrace the whole county?—I can only speak from my own knowledge.

1257. Does your knowledge extend to the whole country, or is it confined to your own district?—I confine my observations to my own district.

1258. Then we may take it 5*s.* is the rate of wages in your district, and that the labourer has no other advantages?—The wages are from 10*d.* to 1*s.* a day.

1259. Mr. *Hardy.*] Has employment been diminished by the state of terrorism in which the county is?—Indirectly I think it has, for I think that if a different state of things existed there would be more employment.

1260. Yesterday it was given in evidence before this Committee that where a gentleman had been in the habit of paying 40*l.* a week, he had now gone down to 3*l.*; is that in consequence of the state of the county?—I should attribute it solely to the state of the county.

1261. And that if the country were governed under an equitable system, the labourer would be benefited?—I think so.

1262. Mr. *Maguire.*] You have a knowledge of other parts of Ireland, except this district?—I have.

1263. And is not the rate of wages lower in that district than generally throughout Ireland?—I should say not for agricultural labourers.

1264. Not in the county of Cork?—I should say that you might put down the average wages of the labourers in Cork at 1*s.* a day.

1265. Colonel *Wilson Patten.*] In Kerry it is lower, is it not?—I am not acquainted with Kerry.

1266. In the case which the last witness spoke of, in which three farms could not be let, that would not be owing to the rate of wages paid for labour, I presume?—I am not aware of the cases to which my brother magistrates referred.

1267. Do you agree with the last two witnesses with regard to the reign of terror which exists in the county of Westmeath?—Fully; it is a matter of notoriety.

1268. Do you believe, as has been stated, that a person returning to Westmeath would be in danger of his life if he was known to have stated anything exposing the present system of Ribbonism?—Mr. Reed stated it, and I quite concur with him; but I must say that I think the danger would be greater by having what he stated partially known than by publishing it in full.

1269. The *Solicitor General for Ireland.*] What is the size of your district?—There are 10 petty sessions within it; it is the district as it was originally appointed.

1270. You told the Committee, that several persons had been arrested under the 23rd section of the Peace Preservation Act, but that there had been very few committals; could you give any idea of the proportion between arrests and committals?—I should say that the cases that came before me at petty sessions, and the cases at the sessions, must have represented between 15 and 20; there have been 20, I should say, and there have been two cases in which I felt justified in convicting.

1271. You say that there were 20 arrests, and on examination they ended in two convictions?—Yes; one got six months.

1272. In answer to the noble Lord, the Member for Liverpool, you stated that these Ribbon conspiracies had affected all the relations between buyer and seller and master and servant?—Yes, that is so.

1273. Does that include the towns, and the dealings over the counter in the shops, say in the town of Mullingar?—No, I did not mean to apply it to transactions of mercantile life; I spoke about agricultural dealings.

1274. How does this Ribbon conspiracy affect the relations between buyer and seller; has it reference to the selection of persons with whom the man deals, or to the price to be paid for an article?—I should not say that as a matter of detail; perhaps in a transaction between a buyer and seller it may arise, but in the ordinary relation between master and servant, and as regards domestic servants, it exists.

1275. Between landlord and tenant?—Between landlord and tenant.

1276. You would not say that it extends to the relation between buyer and seller?—No, I think not.

1277. Is there any such thing as exclusive dealing arising out of this conspiracy; that a man deals more with one than another, or that a man gets more business by being a Ribbonman than he would otherwise get?—I think that there are some traders who have got, to a certain extent, a monopoly from the fact of their being notorious Ribbonmen, and who receive more support and custom.

1278. To what trade does that apply particularly?—Publicans, I should say, decidedly.

1279. Of course spirit-license questions come before the magistrates, do they not?—Yes.

1280. Is there ever a spirit license refused to a man because he is a notorious Ribbonman?—A license has been withdrawn from a man because he has been known to be a notorious Ribbonman; but there has been no application since I came to the district from persons who were known to the Ribbonmen.

1281. In fact, public-houses are very numerous, are they not?—They are far too numerous.

1282. What is the population of Mullingar?—About 5,000.

1283. What is the number of public-houses?—Fifty-three.

1284. Sir *G. Grey.*] Have you generally sat alone at petty sessions, or were there other magistrates associated with you?—Generally speaking, the local magistrates have attended with me.

1285. Are you aware at all whether the state of things which is described as existing in Westmeath has affected the selling price of land?—I rather think not; I have heard the contrary in reference to a sale which recently took place, not that it increased the price, but that the price which the property brought was considerably more than was expected.

1286. (To Captain *Talbot.*) Are you able to state to the Committee whether the state of things which was described as existing in Westmeath has had an effect upon the price of land?—I consider that it has had a considerable effect,

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in so far that nobody wished to buy land in Westmeath.

1287. In places where land has been sold, has it brought fewer years' purchase than it would have done otherwise?—I know of no land having been in the market at all lately.

1288. *Chairman* (to Captain *Barry*).] Do you know of any case in which there has been a refusal to supply Crown witnesses with shelter or food?—No, not to my knowledge.

1289. You have had no difficulty about that?—It has not come under my observation.

1290. (To Captain *Talbot.*) Do you know of any case of that sort?—I know that in Mr. Anketell's case I could not get lodgings for the Crown witnesses, nor would the parties where they were placed cook their dinners. They gave me notice to remove them from their houses, which I had to do, and by direction of the Government I sent them up to Dublin; that was from Mullingar, and that was even while they were waiting for a remand. I could not get food for them; they turned them out of their houses where they were; the parties who kept them in their houses were threatened.

1291. (To Mr. *Barry.*) You did not find that state of things in Mullingar, in the case of Mr. Waters's murder?—No, I did not.

1292. Were there any witnesses who might be called Crown witnesses in that case?—No, the case had not progressed to that stage; it was a remand inquiry from time to time.

1293. Have you known that people have objected and hesitated to be seen speaking to a policeman?—There is the greatest possible unwillingness to impart information, or to be seen at all speaking to a policeman.

1294. They are avoided?—Altogether.

Thursday, 23rd March 1871.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. Bruen.
Mr. Disraeli.
Mr. Downing.
Mr. Chichester Fortescue.
Mr. Gregory.
Sir George Grey.
Mr. Russell Gurney.
Mr. Hardy.
Marquis of Hartington.
Mr. James.
Mr. Maguire.
Colonel Wilson Patten.
Mr. Pemberton.
Mr. Plunket.
Viscount Sandon.
Mr. Serjeant Sherlock.
The Solicitor General for Ireland.

THE MARQUIS OF HARTINGTON, IN THE CHAIR.

Mr. RALPH SMITH CUSACK, called in; and Examined.

Mr. *R. S. Cusack.* 23 March 1871.

1295. *Chairman.*] WILL you state to the Committee what position you hold in Ireland?—I am the Chairman of the Midland Great Western Railway of Ireland.

1296. And of another company, are you not?—Also of the Royal Canal Company, which is amalgamated with the Railway Company by Act of Parliament.

1297. Does that railway and canal run through any part of Westmeath and Meath?—Yes; the railway runs for 40 miles through Westmeath to the south of the county, and there is a branch of about 15 miles in length through the northern portion of the county; it runs from the 38 mile from Dublin, to say, the 78 mile.

1298. And with regard to the canal, where does that go?—The canal runs for about 20 miles through Westmeath.

1299. Do they run through any part of Meath?—The railway does, but not the canal, except on the southern border of the county, about Enfield and Hill of Down.

1300. Do you reside in Westmeath?—No, I reside in Dublin; my property is in the county of Meath.

1301. I believe you hold the commission of the peace for the county of Meath?—Yes, both for Dublin and Meath; I also hold the office of Clerk of the Crown and Hanaper for Ireland.

1302. How long have you been chairman of the railway?—Upwards of five years.

1303. Have any outrages been committed on the railway in the counties of Meath or Westmeath?—A great many.

1304. Can you state to the Committee the number that have occurred since you have been chairman?—No; they are so very numerous; there have been constant outrages, so far as obstructing the line, and throwing stones as the train goes; I will give the Committee a few cases of which I have made a note if they desire it.

1305. Will you describe those cases to the Committe?—In the county of Westmeath we had the murder of our station master at Mullingar, Mr. Anketell, that is the 50th mile from Dublin. At the 53rd mile we had rails removed and a train upset.

1306. When was that?—All these events were within five years, and I think nearly all within two or three years; it is as near as can be two years since Mr. Anketell was murdered, and the others were about the same time. About three years ago, at the 55th mile, we had rails taken up, the mail train upset, and a gentleman's leg broken; three or four other persons were injured. At the 62nd mile, within the last couple of months, there was a man working on the line who was arrested by the authorities and imprisoned for three months; several persons were asked to take his place and others applied for the place.

1307. Colonel *Wilson Patten.*] For what crime was he taken up?—I think that it was under the Peace Preservation Act, for being out at night; I am not quite sure; I have heard that from one of the magistrates, all those who wished to fill the place were warned not to do so, and from that time to this we have never been able to get anyone to take his place.

1308. Sir *G. Grey.*] What was the man?—He was a mere labouring man upon the line; the place is still vacant; no one would take it. The man is out of gaol, and he is applying to get back to the situation.

1309. *Chairman.*] Are there any other cases which you would wish to mention to the Committee?—At the 64th mile we had a large piece of rock thrown off a bridge; it fell upon the fireman's thigh and broke it, and he was laid up for a year and a half with it.

1310. Mr. *Plunket.*] How long ago was that?—About two years ago.

1311. *Chairman.*] Have any of those cases been recent?—The case of that man whose place is vacant is happening at this moment; we cannot fill the place now; he has only been out of gaol a fortnight. At the 68th mile the inspector was reported unfit for his work, and the place was offered by the engineer to several others, but they were all warned that they should not take it, and we could not get any other to take his place, and

and this inefficient man is still inspector over that portion of the line.

1312. Was the late inspector dismissed?—No, he was only reported unfit for his duty, and we wished to appoint another inspector, but the others were all afraid to take it, and he still holds the place, which the engineer considers he is unfit for.

1313. What salary is attached to that office?—I should think that man perhaps has a pound a week, and he has most likely a house and a garden, but that I cannot speak to exactly.

1314. What are the duties of that officer?—He is answerable for the proper laying and maintenance of the line over a certain number of miles, and the re-laying of the line, and reporting what materials may be required.

1315. Has he a considerable number of men under him?—I should think he would have perhaps about three lengths; that is to say, he would have about fifteen men under him.

1316. I think you mentioned the murder of Mr. Anketell, and the injury done to one of the servants of the company; the other cases appear to be outrages, in the nature of taking up rails or upsetting the train?—Yes, and obstructing the line; several times stones have been put upon the line; I had a letter from our manager only this morning telling me of an attempt to upset a train in the county of Mayo the night before last.

1317. Is that also upon your line?—Yes.

1318. Have there been any other cases in which servants of the company have been injured, beaten, or assaulted?—There have been different cases, but I cannot fix them exactly as occurring in Westmeath; there were some in the county of Meath. We have had a station master for several months guarded by the police.

1319. In the county of Meath?—Yes, at Trim, the county town.

1320. Was he threatened?—Yes, he received several threatening letters.

1321. Do you wish to mention any outrages that have occurred in Meath besides that?—Yes; about a year and a half ago a train was fired at about 15 miles from Dublin, and 50 slugs were lodged in the panel of a carriage.

1322. Were there any other cases?—About five miles from that, about the same time two rails were taken out of the line.

1323. Can you trace those outrages to any cause?—I think those two cases, the firing at the train and the taking up of the rails, arose from the dismissal of one man who was a servant of the company just at that time.

1324. Are threatening letters often sent to persons in the employment of the company?—Yes, I believe, very often.

1325. Have you ever received any?—No. Personally, I have been treated with great kindness by the people; I have never myself had anything to fear or dread from them.

1326. To whom are the threatening letters sent; to the secretary and other officials?—No, they are generally sent to the station master. The station master I alluded to at Trim got several letters, and Mr. Anketell got several letters before he was shot. Our manager got a threatening letter ately.

1327. Are the persons in your employment chiefly natives of the counties of Meath and Westmeath?—Generally they are natives of the districts in which they work.

1328. Have you any reason to connect those outrages with what is known as the Ribbon conspiracy?—I have always heard that they were connected with it; that is the opinion of every one that I have spoken to on the subject who ought to be well acquainted with it.

1329. Is that the opinion of the officers of your company?—Certainly.

1330. Does the existence, or the supposed existence, of this conspiracy interfere with the management and working of your line?—Very much indeed.

1331. Will you explain to the Committee in what way?—I have given the Committee instances of two cases; one where this man was arrested and sent to gaol, and whose place was vacant for some months, and we cannot get any one to take his place; there are five men on each three miles, and if those five men had been put in gaol instead of the one, we should have found it just as difficult to get five men as we did the one, and we should have been obliged to go on without any one to mind the line.

1332. In making any fresh appointments, you have to consider whether your action would be agreeable or disagreeable to the Ribbon Society?—I am not exactly sure whether that is so, but I am quite sure that a difficulty is always felt in filling an appointment, unless the person selected is pleasing to the district.

1333. Are you able to manage the affairs of the company with the same independence as you would if it were a company in England?—Clearly not; we are not able to make arrangements in those districts which are supposed to tend to Ribbonism, as we are in other districts. There are some parts of our line that we can manage quite as easily as they can manage any line in England.

1334. Will you state what is the length of your line?—It is 375 miles.

1335. And about 40 miles of that length are in Westmeath?—Forty miles exactly, I think; from the 38th to the 78th mile.

1336. What other counties do you go through?—Through Dublin, Kildare, Meath, Longford, Leitrim, Sligo, Galway, Mayo, and Roscommon.

1337. You have had some outrages in Mayo, have you not?—Yes, we have had outrages latterly in Mayo, but they have all been confined, I may say, within two miles, and I think myself that that is not connected with Ribbonism.

1338. Have you had any outrages in any of the other counties?—No very serious outrage I think; we have had stone throwing at trains, but our principal outrages have been confined to Meath and Westmeath. When I say Meath, I refer only to a portion of the county of Meath; the other side of the county is as quiet as any other part of Ireland.

1339. Mr. *Solicitor General for Ireland.*] You refer to that portion on the side of Westmeath?—About Trim, principally.

1340. *Chairman.*] When you say that you do not attribute these outrages in Mayo to Ribbonism, to what do you attribute them?—From the information which I have acquired, I think they have been owing to some family feud between two branches of a family working on the line. I think one branch is anxious to get rid of an inspector who was connected with the family. I do not trace that at all to Ribbonism; I think that we may get at the bottom of that in some other way. If we had removed the inspector whom I wished to remove a fort-

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night ago, I think we should have stopped the whole thing.

1341. Have you been able to bring to justice any of the perpetrators of those outrages?—No; I do not remember any case, even of those which I have given to the Committee, where the offender has been brought to justice.

1342. Are they always reported immediately to the police?—Always.

1343 The police have endeavoured to discover the offender, have they not?—They have done all they possibly could, I think.

1344. But you recollect no case in which the offender has been punished?—Not in any serious case.

1345. Sir *G. Grey.*] Have any arrests been made?—Yes; in the case of Mr. Anketell the grand jury found true bills against two men.

1346. Is that the only case in which there has been an arrest?—Arrests may have been made, but the parties were discharged almost immediately, I think.

1347. *Chairman.*] Are you aware whether outrages have taken place upon the canal with which you are connected?—No; I think since I have been connected with the line, there has been no outrage upon the canal, although it runs parallel to the line.

1348. How do you account for that?—I account for it by their having a secret society among the men, and by their having been allowed for years to have all the appointments to themselves. As soon as a man dies, or goes away, the company are told who to put into his place. Those people act as a sort of police, and protect the place.

1349. Who are you told by?—The engineer tells the directors, and it comes to him through the very lowest of the staff.

1350. You state that the recommendation comes to the directors from the engineer?—The recommendation comes to the directors from the engineer, and it comes to him from some of the subordinates.

1351. But that system of appointment was not prevalent upon the railway?—Certainly not.

1352. Are the outrages intended to force you to adopt a similar system upon the railway?—I think not; it is a system which could not be adopted upon the railway.

1353. Why is it adopted upon the canal and not upon the railway?—There is no fear of the canal getting out of order in the same way as the railway does; there is very little traffic upon it.

1354. You trace the outrages upon the railway to the dictation of the Ribbon Society?—In Meath and Westmeath I do.

1355. Are you acquainted with any of the supposed leaders of the society?—No, I do not think I am; I have heard their names, and the common report in Westmeath respecting them.

1356. But you have no knowledge of them yourself?—None, whatever.

1357. Are there any other facts which you wish to mention to the Committee?—I should be very glad to give the Committee every information; I do not exactly know what they may require.

1358. Mr. *Disraeli.*] Are you a magistrate?—Yes, for the counties of Dublin and Meath.

1359. Not for Westmeath?—No, not for Westmeath.

1360. I suppose that you conferred with the magistrates of Westmeath upon those acts you have referred to?—Yes, frequently, all through; and in the case of Mr. Anketell I had constant interviews with Captain Talbot; I was with Mr. Anketell after he was fired at, shortly before he died.

1361. There is no doubt that all these acts of violence have been made duly known to the Government?—Certainly.

1362. You have told the Committee nothing, as I understand, which was not known to the Government?—I think not.

1363. Mr. *Hardy.*] With reference to cases of dismissal, have you had to dismiss men in the cases which you have spoken of; have you ever yielded to the demands which have been made upon you when you have been called upon to dismiss a man?—I do not know exactly; I am quite sure the engineer has had to take back persons who had been dismissed.

1364. Subsequently to Mr. Anketell's case, have you known a case where a man was threatened, and where the company were called upon to dismiss him?—I cannot call to recollection any case of that sort; I think Mr. Anketell's case was about the commencement.

1365. Have you applied to the authorities and the Government upon the subject?—I have very often been in communication with them.

1366. Who have you applied to?—I have been in very frequent communication with Mr. Burke, the present Under Secretary, and with the previous Under Secretaries and Secretaries, and with the resident magistrates of the district.

1367. Have you been in communication with any of the Crown prosecutors?—Yes; I was in communication with Mr. Seed lately upon one of the very cases I mentioned; of Mr. Shaw, the station master at Trim, who was threatened there; and acting upon the suggestion of the police authorities, we made the station ball-proof, and he was guarded at the station day and night. We have recently removed him at the suggestion of the Crown solicitor.

1368. Was that suggestion given by word of mouth or in writing?—I received a letter from Mr. Seed.

1369. Have you that letter with you?—Yes, I have (*producing the same*). That case occurred in the county of Meath, not in the county of Westmeath. This is the letter from Mr. Seed, in which he recommends me to take the man away.

1370. Will you be kind enough to read that letter?—I will. "My dear Cusack,—The investigation of the case of a man of the name of William Weldon, charged with stealing coals from the railway station at Trim." (I may tell you that I think the cause of animosity to Mr. Shaw was that he gave information to the police about some man that was found stealing coals off a cart which had left the station; they were in the habit of doing that, I believe) "renders it imperative on me to recommend to you the removal of Mr. Shaw, the station master, to some other station, as, in my opinion, and that of the Crown counsel, his personal safety will be greatly endangered should he be allowed to remain at Trim; he has already been served with several threatening letters threatening him with the fate of poor Anketell at Mullingar, who was murdered under precisely similar circumstances as those which now threaten the life of Shaw; he cannot stir

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out unless accompanied by two police constables, and the sub-inspector at Trim informed us that his life is in great peril. Having thus relieved myself of all responsibililty in making this communication, I must leave the matter with you to deal with it as you may think proper, but I should be wanting in my duty if I were not to report to you the high opinion which we all entertain for Mr. Shaw, whose intelligence, zeal, and high sense of duty in using every exertion in his power to discover the perpetrators of the late robberies from the Trim Station is beyond all praise; he must be an invaluable officer to any company. Believe me to be, most truly, S. Seed, Crown Solicitor."

1371. That letter was written this month?—Yes, it is dated the 1st of March.

1372. In consequence of that communication, did you make any further application to the authorities?—I showed that letter to Mr. Burke, the under secretary and he advised me to act upon it; we were anxious to have left Mr. Shaw there; he wished to stay himself, and the police authorities thought that he could not possibly be touched; he was very much annoyed at being taken away; he thought that by remaining the perpetrators and writers of these threatening letters would have been discovered.

1373. Notwithstanding Mr. Shaw's willingness to remain at Trim, and encounter the danger, such as it was, you felt bound, from these warnings of the Government officer, to remove him?—I removed him at once, because the same thing had happened at Mullingar, in the case of Mr. Anketell. I wanted to remove him from the station and he would not leave, and he was shot within a week afterwards.

1374. With respect to Mr. Anketell's murder, to what cause do you attribute his death?—The station at Mullingar had been very badly managed before he went there; everything had got into loose order, and the porters and the people were allowed to do what they liked; he was picked out as a first-rate station master to go there, and I think he got some of the porters removed; and there was a great feeling raised against him.

1375. In fact, in both cases, it was because the station masters did their duty that they were threatened, and one suffered death and the other was removed?—Certainly, this man I refer to informed me that he found the people stealing coals.

1376. Mr. *Bruen.*] Have you reason to believe that if the same system of stealing which was carried on at Trim Station was still carried on, and the new station master was to interfere in the same way, his life would also be in danger?—I judge from the other case that he would be very likely to get into trouble too if he gave information about these cases.

1377. So, in fact, you believe that system strikes at the very root of all authority on the part of the railway company?—Unquestionably it does in the case of those two counties I have alluded to, Westmeath and part of Meath.

1378. Mr. *Downing.*] As far as I gather from your evidence, there is only one case that has occurred within a recent period, and that was the case of a man who was sent to gaol for a few months?—No, excuse me; this case of Mr. Shaw occurred within the last few days.

1379. But except that case there has been no other recently, has there?—There was the case where the man was sent to gaol and the case of the inspector, whom we cannot get rid of, and whose inefficiency is going on at this moment, because he is doing a duty he ought not to be doing.

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1380. The other cases, I think, you stated occurred about three years ago?—I think they are all within three years. Mr. Anketell's murder was about two years ago. It was exactly this month two years.

1381. At the time these cases severally occurred, did you make a report to the police?—The police heard of them before I heard of them myself in most of the cases.

1382. You state that you hold the appointment of clerk to the Crown and clerk to the Hanaper?—Yes, I do.

1383. That is an appointment derived from the Ministry of the day?—It is.

1384. When were you appointed?—I was appointed by the Government of Lord Derby, in 1858.

1385. Are you not aware that similar cases to those you have just described have occurred upon the railways in some of the most peaceable counties in Ireland?—Not upon the railways.

1386. Are you not aware that, in the county of Cork, which is a remarkably quiet county, there have been similar cases of injury to the permanent way and cases of stones being thrown at the trains?—Yes, I frequently see stone throwing.

1387. And you told the Committee that there were stones placed upon the railway in other counties besides Westmeath?—In Mayo, I stated that there had been cases.

1388. And probably in Longford?—Stone throwing has been prevalent, but not cases of stones being placed upon the line.

1389. There was one case in which you said a large stone was thrown from a bridge, which fell upon the fireman?—It struck the fireman of the engine upon the thigh and shattered the bone of the leg; that was a large stone landed off the top of an iron bridge; I thought it might have been a coping stone, but it was not; it came from an iron bridge, and it must have been brought there and landed down.

1390. Was there any proof that that was thrown?—The man was seen throwing it.

1391. You stated that the inspector had under him 15 men?—I stated that as my belief; I believe that is about the number.

1392. And that he had considerable duties to perform; a number of miles of line to look after and see that everything was in order?—Yes; he would have the care of a certain number of miles of line.

1393. Let me ask you, has there not been a remonstrance made with regard to the amount of remuneration the people working upon the line received?—Never; our wages are very fair indeed.

1394. No complaint has been made to your company?—None whatever. I am talking now of the labouring class; of course, the clerks may ask occasionally for higher wages, but from the time I have been chairman, up to this time, there has been no complaint among the labouring men about wages, and we can always get plenty of men.

1395. Personally you have always received courtesy and kindness at the hands of the people?—Very great; I should not be afraid to go amongst them at any time.

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1396. Holding the important offices that you do, and being a magistrate for two counties, and clerk to the Crown and Hanaper, can you give the Committee any advice with reference to putting an end to these outrages?—I cannot conceive anything, except the arrest and imprisonment of the leaders if they are known to the authorities, as I have always understood they are; public report states that the leaders of the society are known, and if that is the case, I see nothing for it except to arrest and put them in gaol.

1397. Have you any reason, from any evidence that you can rely upon, to say that those leaders which you refer to are connected with any of the outrages that have occurred upon your line?—No, I cannot, I do not know that they are.

1398. Viscount *Sandon.*] With regard to the strange system of appointment which prevails upon the canal, have you reason to suppose that that is supported by the Ribbon conspiracy?—I do not say it is caused by the Ribbon conspiracy, because I think it existed for a long time before my time, but it certainly has the effect of keeping us all quiet upon the canal.

1399. You have no reason for connecting that with the Ribbon conspiracy?—No, I have not.

1400. Have you any reason to suppose that the men themselves are Ribbonmen?—No, I have not.

1401. Then, with respect to your railway officials in the district of Westmeath, do you suppose that all of them, or nearly all of them, belong to the Ribbon conspiracy?—No, I should be sorry to think so.

1402. Will you mention to the Committee what class of officials it is that you believe are connected with the Ribbon conspiracy?—I should think that it is the lower class, mostly the labouring class.

1403. Those who are concerned with the maintenance of the permanent way?—Yes, I think some of them; a good many of them must be from the outrages that have occurred, and from the difficulty of acquiring information respecting them.

1404. Have you reason to suppose that the removal of this system of terrorism would be acceptable to the people in your district generally?—I think it would.

1405. What reason have you for supposing so?—I think the men themselves, from conversations I have had with them when outrages have occurred, would wish that something were done to put a stop to it. The Board adopted the system a few years ago (I met the men at the time myself in the county and spoke to them about it), of reducing their pay whenever an outrage occurred. At that time I went down myself and assembled those men, and spoke to them.

1406. Do you gather from that that the men were weary of the system?—I think so.

1407. Did you give any special instructions with regard to the supplying the station master's place at Trim?—No; his place is not supplied at present; there is merely what is called a relief clerk there, a man who goes about supplying the place of the station masters who are sick, or away on leave, or for other causes.

1408. Do you think there will be any difficulty in filling up the place?—No; because I told the manager to offer it to one of our station masters, who is a sturdy, determined fellow, and he has accepted the place.

1409. Mr. *Plunket.*] Will you inform the Committee what wages your labourers get?—The labourers get 10*s.* a week, what we call standing wages, that is, wet or dry; and if they are unwell, or absent from any fair cause, or meet with any accident, they are paid just the same. In addition to that, many of them have houses and gardens upon the banks along the line.

1410. To whom do you say you showed that letter in which Mr. Seed relieves himself from all the responsibility?—I showed it to Mr. Burke, the Under Secretary.

1411. At the castle of Dublin?—Yes.

1412. Mr. Serjeant *Sherlock.*] In reference to this patronage on the canal, you are aware that there is another canal which flows through part of the county of Westmeath, the Grand Canal?—Yes, the Grand Canal flows through a part of the county of Westmeath.

1413. Do you happen to know whether the same system prevails in the management of that canal?—No; I never made any inquiries about that.

1414. But this system has been going on for a great many years, has it not?—Yes; long before my time.

1415. Did you report the circumstances to the Government with reference to the canal?—No, I do not think I ever did.

1416. Mr. *Maguire.*] You say that the wages on the railway are 10*s.* a week, do you not?—There are five men in each gang; four of them get 10*s.* a week, and the fifth gets 13*s.* 6*d.*

1417. And they have other advantages besides?—A great many of them have houses, and a much larger number still have bits of the banks of the line for gardens.

1418. So far as your knowledge extends, what is your idea of the average wage of the agricultural labourer in those districts?—I think it is scarcely so much as that, and this is better than 10*s.* where the days would be broken, and where they would lose wet days; we pay them wet or dry.

1419. I am talking of ordinary agricultural labourers; what is their condition in general; is it good or bad, or has it improved of late?—I think it has improved of late; in most parts I think it is difficult to get labourers.

1420. Then how can you account for the wages being so low as 10*d.* or a 1*s.* a day, as the Committee heard it stated yesterday?—I do not know any case of their being so low as that.

1421. If those statements were perfectly accurate, do you not think that this is a deplorable state of things?—I do not think men could live on it in Ireland.

1422. Assuming the statements made yesterday by Captain Talbot, Mr. Reade, and Captain Barry to be true, is not that rather a lamentable state of things?—I think so; I do not think the men could live on it at the present rate of provisions.

1423. Have you ever given your consideration to this question, whether if the Government and Parliament adopted what we term restrictive or prohibitory measures upon the one hand, it would not be well to think of some remedial measures upon the other hand, for the purpose of raising the general condition of the agricultural population and of the labouring classes?—I think it would be most desirable if any system could be adopted to raise them from the position in which they are to a better one.

1424. On all other parts of the line, do you find

find any more difficulty in carrying on your business than directors of other railways do in other parts of the world?—I think none whatever; we occasionally may have a difficulty, but on a large system I suppose they have troubles in all places; I think we get on as fairly as could be expected.

1425. Do you find the railway servants generally obedient and prompt?—Yes, they are.

1426. You have not had many accidents, I believe?—Very few.

1427. Generally the men are reliable?—Quite so.

1428. Colonel *Wilson Patten.*] With regard to the difficulty of obtaining labourers, does that observation apply to Westmeath as well as to the other counties?—I think we have not much difficulty, because the men come to us in preference to others, as they are certain of getting employment. I know that in the harvest time in Meath, where my own property is, it is very difficult for farmers to get labourers.

1429. But in the average time of year is that the case?—There may be some localities thickly populated, and where there is more labour to be had, but I think, generally speaking, the people are fairly employed in those two counties.

1430. Mr. *Solicitor General for Ireland.*] You have told the Committee that you were clerk to the Crown and Hanaper?—I have.

1431. You have no official connection in consequence of holding that office, with crime and its detection?—None whatever.

1432. The term Clerk of the Crown means what?—It is Clerk of the Crown in Chancery; it is my duty to issue the writs for the Members of Parliament, and so on.

1433. You have no connection with crime, or the administration of justice in respect of that office?—None whatever.

1434. Your evidence is derived entirely from your general knowledge as a gentleman connected with the country and as chairman of the Midland Railway Company?—Exactly.

1435. How long have you been chairman of the Midland Railway Company?—Upwards of five years.

1436. And during all that time this system of appointments upon the canal which you have described, has been going on?—Yes; and, as I understand, long before my time.

1437. At all events during your time?—Certainly.

1438. And during all your time, those five years, this system of outrages upon the railway has being going on, is that so?—No; I do not say that, I think three years would cover that.

1439. That is to say, three years back from the present time?—Three years back from the present time.

1440. Of course your brother directors are aware of that system of appointment upon the canal?—They are.

1441. And you think it works well?—I think we have no alternative, it works very well; they take care of the canal for us.

1442. And if that system were not adopted, you would be afraid of outrages upon the canal?—I certainly thought it was not a sound system, and I was anxious to change it, but I was told you must appoint such-and-such men; there is no alternative. The reason I wish to change it is that they named a man who had been dismissed upon a former occasion; I objected to his appointment, but the engineer said, you must appoint this man, or you will have the canal over the country.

1443. I suppose they could cut the canal in the night without any difficulty, if they choose?—Yes; they might cut the canal; the man could ruin us in a night, so that we could not pay a dividend.

1444. Have you any idea how long that system has being going on?—I understand that it has been going on for a great many years.

1445. Would you say that it has been going on 10 years?—I would say that it has been going on 20 years before the railway was established.

1446. Was it going on before the railway was made?—The railway is about 20 years old; I think it is very probable that it was.

1447. And I believe I am right in saying that for a great number of miles the railway runs along the canal bank practically, that is to say, they run in parallel lines?—Yes; they run for 60 miles off and on nearly parallel.

1448. I suppose you apprehend that if that system were altered upon the canal, and any injury was done to the canal, injury would also be done to the railway?—It is quite possible; I should not like to alter the system, it would be a very great risk and responsibility.

1449. You told the Committee that there was a part of Meath that was peaceable and well disposed?—Certainly; my own property is in Meath, and it is peaceable. I would as soon be there in the middle of the night as in Sackville-street; it is a very small portion that is disturbed just along the line of railway towards Trim.

1450. Is that the side of Meath that lies towards Westmeath?—Yes.

1451. The adjoining part to Westmeath, is it not?—Yes.

1452. Do you know anything at all about King's County?—No, I do not.

1453. There is no part of your railway which runs near that I believe?—It runs near.

1454. But not through King's County?—No, I do not think we touch it at all.

1455. You say with respect to Mr. Anketell, that before Mr. Anketell's murder, I think about a week before, there had been a recommendation that he should be removed?—Mr. Anketell had got three or four threatening letters, and I have several times during a period which extended perhaps over two months, advised him to leave, and about 10 days before he was shot he received a threatening letter to tell him that he would be shot the next week; I was going to London, and I sent for him and told him that I strongly advised him to be removed from Mullingar, but he declined to leave.

1456. Sir *G. Grey.*] To go to another station I presume?—To go to another station.

1457. Mr. *Solicitor General for Ireland.*] It was acting upon that, having that in your mind in connection with Mr. Seed's letter, that you took the proceedings you did in connection with Mr. Shaw?—Certainly; I did not think however that Mr. Seed was right; I do not think Mr. Shaw would have been shot, and I do not think he thought so himself.

1458. You did not think that there was any danger that he would have been shot?—I do not think so; he was in a ball-proof house guarded by the police.

1459. But he would occasionally, I suppose,

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go out of that house?—But the police were always with him.

1460. Do you not believe that Mr. Seed gave you that advice perfectly *bonâ fide*?—Certainly.

1461. Do you know Mr. Seed?—I know him perfectly well.

1462. You know that he has been many years Crown Solicitor for the counties of Meath and Kildare?—I am certain that Mr. Seed believed everything that he wrote to me.

1463. And had good and valid reasons for the opinion he gave?—I am sure he had.

1464. When did you get that letter from Mr. Seed?—It bears date the 1st of March; I presume I got it upon the 2nd of March.

1465. Mr. Seed is the Crown Solicitor, is he not?—Yes.

1466. Are you aware that that is a permanent appointment?—Yes.

1467. It does not go out with the Government?—No.

1468. He is a perfectly independent man?—He has nothing to say to the Government; I am sure he wrote that letter on his own account and perfectly *bonâ fide*.

1469. He did not write it on account of directions received from the Castle?—I am quite sure of that, the letter bears that upon the face of it. I have known Mr. Seed for years, and he writes to me as a friend giving me friendly advice, and I thought it right to act upon it.

1470. Mr. *Chichester Fortescue.*] Did I understand you to say that you did not consider the state of things prevailing amongst the men employed upon the canal had anything to do with Ribbonism?—I could not say that I think the question which was put to me was whether I could connect it with Ribbonism, and I could not say that I could; I had no reason to say that it was connected with Ribbonism.

1471. Then why do you connect the outrages which have been committed upon the railway with Ribbonism?—From conversations which I have had with resident magistrates and the police authorities; they say they have traced them all through to Ribbonism.

1472. But you say you think that the notorious existence of Ribbonism in the district has nothing to do with the state of things that prevailed upon the canal?—I dare say it may strengthen their hands in carrying these things out.

1473. Is not Ribbonism constantly made use of for the purposes of gratifying and carrying out private vengeance?—I believe it is.

1474. That may have been said to be the fact in Mr. Anketell's case?—I think so.

1475. Have you been long acquainted with Westmeath and the neighbouring district?—With Meath I have for many years, but with Westmeath I have not been very much acquainted except since I became chairman of the line five years ago.

1476. Are you aware that Ribbonism has been for a good many years deeply rooted in that district?—I could not say that from my own knowledge.

1477. You could not go back beyond five years?—No.

1478. You of course took a deep and painful interest in the case of Mr. Anketell; have you any reason to be dissatisfied with the course taken by the authorities and the Government in endeavouring to bring the guilty parties to justice in that case?—None whatever; I think that every thing that could have been done was done; I think that Captain Talbot, who was the resident magistrate there, used every exertion, and the police authorities did the same; nothing more could possibly have been done.

1479. And I believe you yourself were in frequent communication with Mr. Burke and the authorities in Dublin?—I was in communication with whoever was there; I do not think Mr. Burke was there at the time, but I was in constant communication with Captain Talbot; I constantly met him in Dublin, and I repeat that I do not think that anything more could have been done than was done.

1480. A true bill was found against two men I believe?—A true bill was found against two men by the grand jury of Westmeath.

1481. But sufficient evidence could not be found to put those men on trial?—That was so. In the opinion of the law officers it was not prudent to put them upon their trial, and they were let out.

1482. Are you able to give the Committee any information from your own knowledge, with reference to the state of the other parts of the country through which your line runs at this moment, as compared with what it was, we will say a year, or a year and a-half ago; take Mayo, for instance, or the other portions of Meath?—If I except that small portion of Mayo that I alluded to in a previous part of my examination, I would say that there is no difference, nor increase of crime in the last year.

1483. But you are probably aware that Mayo was in a very disturbed state in the winter of the year 1869–70?—Yes, I am.

1484. Is it in a disturbed state now?—I should say that it was in a disturbed state now, from the case of Mr. Crotty, who was fired at the other day.

1485. I want to ascertain whether you know, from your own knowledge of these parts of the country, that they are much more free from outrage now than they were a year or a year and a-half ago?—I think those parts of the country through which our line runs are very free from outrage.

1486. Sir *G. Grey.*] Have you found that persons employed upon the line have been unwilling to give assistance in the case of the outrages you have described, either in repairing the injury done, or in assisting to discover the perpetrators of them?—We have not discovered much from them, but I should be sorry to say that they have been unwilling to give information.

1487. Have the persons in your employment in the neighbourhood of the outrage shown any sympathy with the outrage committed, or on the contrary, with the company that employed them?—I could not say that they have shown any sympathy one way or the other.

1488. Is it your practice to reduce the pay of persons working on the line in the neighbourhood of the place where an outrage has been committed?—Yes, it is. I have the notice with me that we issued upon that point; it is signed by myself; the engineer did not like to sign it himself, as he thought it might bring him into trouble. "That with a view to mark the displeasure of the board of directors at the frequent undiscovered

undiscovered outrages that have been committed by the placing of stones and other obstructions on the line, the engineer has received positive orders that the wages of all permanent way men employed by the company on the length where any such outrage occurs, and on each of the adjoining lengths, shall be reduced from 10 *s.* to 9 *s.* per week for 12 months following the date of the outrage, unless in the meantime such evidence is given as may lead to the discovery of the party or parties who committed the outrage, in which case the ordinary rate of wages, 10 *s.* per week, will be resumed. Gangers' wages will be also reduced 1 *s.* 6 *d.* per week." That is dated the 6th of August 1868.

1489. Did that have any effect?—It has had a very good effect.

1490. How often have you had to enforce that notice by the reduction of wages, in consequence of any outrage upon the line?—Immediately after it was issued it was enforced twice, and from that period up to a very recent date we never had to enforce it, until the outrage of which I spoke in Mayo.

1491. You think that the enforcing of that rule has had a beneficial effect in the prevention of outrages otherwise likely to be committed?—Yes, I do.

1492. In the event of the police tax being imposed upon a district where an outrage has been committed, does the railway company contribute to the special tax for the district it passes through?—Yes; we have been very heavily taxed; we have to pay a large quota.

1493. Have you formed any opinion of the effect of that tax?—I think if it was a house tax you would have more people anxious to detect crime, and not to be oppressed with the tax.

1494. Was that notice which you read just now, given in consequence of recent outrages upon the line?—Yes; after putting stones upon the line, I think it was, and after one of those cases where the rails had been taken up; it was in consequence of some outrage that had occurred, perhaps, the week before that.

1495. Mr. *Maguire.*] You state that you are in favour of a house tax upon this ground, that a tax upon land is liable to affect innocent people. Now, with reference to a house tax, would it not be just as liable to affect innocent people as a tax upon land?—Of course, there is no doubt that a good many innocent people would be affected, but I think the more people in a district you can make feel the penalty of an outrage the better, and the more you make them interested in putting a stop to outrages the better.

1496. But, at the same time, innocent people would be unjustly affected by it?—They would be affected by it, no matter how the tax is imposed. I cannot conceive any plan of taxation by which some innocent people would not be affected.

1497. Mr. Serjeant *Sherlock.*] The railway company would not be subject to the house tax you propose, would it?—That never struck me; but our buildings are, of course, houses to a certain extent.

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1498. *Chairman.*] Have you ever investigated yourself any of those cases of outrage that happened upon the line?—Yes; the board have investigated them, but we failed to get information.

1499. Have you found a difficulty in obtaining information, and a reluctance upon the part of people to give evidence?—As a general rule they all say that they know nothing about it.

1500. Have you had reason to suppose that some of the men must have known something about some of these cases?—Yes, I do think so.

1501. When a serious outrage occurs, it is put into the hands of the police, is it not?—Yes; in every case, serious or not, the police get information of it.

1502. And the investigation is conducted by them, I presume, and not by you or any of your officers?—It is conducted by the resident magistrate and by the police.

1503. In Mr. Anketell's case, was any protection asked for, for Mr. Anketell after the receipt of the threatening letter?—No, I think not; because it was in the county town, and there was plenty of police and military there.

1504. Did Mr. Anketell report having received threatening letters to you?—The resident magistrate was quite aware of everything.

1505. Captain Talbot stated that neither Mr. Anketell nor any of the servants of the company made any official complaint; can you say why that was?—I cannot recollect at present; but I was under the impression all through that Captain Talbot was in fact aware that Mr. Anketell was a marked man.

1506. Mr. *Solicitor General for Ireland.*] Were you in the Court of Exchequer at all during the trial of Gogherty against the "Daily Express" for libel?—No, I was not.

1507. Did it not appear at that trial that Mr. Anketell was said to have told people in the town of Mullingar, amongst others, Doctor ——, that his life had been threatened, and that he would be shot?—The doctor you allude to told me himself when Mr. Anketell was dying that he was not surprised that he had been fired at.

1508. Just one question with reference to the document that you have read in answer to a question by the Right honourable Member for Morpeth, dated the 6th of August 1868; is that the date of it?—Yes.

1509. I suppose that was issued in consequence of preceding outrages?—I think it was issued in consequence of a rail being taken up at the 62nd mile.

1510. An outrage upon the railway?—Yes, an outrage immediately before this notice was issued.

Mr. George Augustus Rochfort Boyd, called in; and Examined.

1511. *Chairman.*] You were a member of the grand jury, were you not, at the late assizes for Westmeath?—Yes.

1512. Were you requested by the grand jury to state their views to the Government upon this Committee?—Not exactly; I was commissioned by several members of the grand jury after the telegram, which was sent informing your Lordship of the resolution which was come to by them, to communicate with as many as I could in the House with regard to the subject matter of that resolution.

Mr. *Rochfort Boyd.*

Mr. *Rochfort Boyd.*

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1513. Is there any statement which you wish to make to the Committee with regard to the state of Westmeath; is there any addition that you wish to make to that resolution with reference to the existing state of things in Westmeath, and as regards the Ribbon Society?—The Ribbon Society has grown, no doubt, very much in power and intensity, and in the certainty of its action with regard to outrage within some years past.

1514. Within what time should you say?—I should say within 10 or 15 years.

1515. How long have you been acquainted with Westmeath?—I have been since I came of age deputy lieutenant and magistrate of the county; for 32 or 33 years.

1516. Have you resided there constantly?—Not constantly, for I have a residence in England as well, but I should say that for three-quarters of my time I reside there.

1517. Has Ribbonism existed during the whole of the time?—Certainly.

1518. But you state that it has become more intense during the last 10 or 15 years?—Yes.

1519. Has that been without intermission or with periods of intermission during those years?—If you speak or judge of intermission by the absence of outrage, yes, but if you speak of the organisation, no.

1520. Do you believe that even where outrages have not been frequent, the organisation has still existed?—Certainly.

1521. Upon what facts do you form that opinion?—With regard to the cessation of outrage when the Coercion Bill, as they called it, was brought in, or rather before it was brought in, the impression prevailing all over the county was that the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act would be carried out.

1522. What Bill are you referring to?—The Peace Preservation Act, but we call it the Coercion Bill. There was an impression that power to suspend the Habeas Corpus Act would be taken in conformity with the recommendation of a very large magistrates meeting, which was held shortly before in Westmeath.

1523. What is the date of that meeting?—The 24th of March 1869.

1524. Have you a copy of the recommendation?—I have a copy; I was deputed to send a copy to Lord Spencer, and I did so, and I chanced to have a copy of my letter, but I have no other document than a copy of the letter and the resolutions which I sent forward. I have the resolutions in the room.

1525. It was not a meeting of the grand jury, but a meeting of the magistrates, I believe?—It was a meeting convened just after the murder of Mr. Anketell, the station master.

1526. By whom?—By the Vice Lieutenant, who is now dead, Lord Castlemaine, and the meeting was attended, I think, by every magistrate usually resident in the county, with the exception perhaps of four or five, who are either absent from illness, or temporarily absent upon the continent.

1527. Sir *G. Grey.*] Do you include also the stipendiary magistrates?—No, we deny the right of the stipendiary magistrates to attend any meetings of that sort. It is hardly necessary to read my letter to Sir Edward Wetherall, but the recommendations or suggestions, as they are called, are more important.

1528. *Chairman.*] We should be glad if you would read such portions of the letter as relate to this matter?—It is a private letter to Sir Edward Wetherall, dated 27th March 1869. "Dear Sir Edward Wetherall,—I enclose copy of the principal resolutions passed at the meeting of magistrates on the 24th instant, in order that his Excellency may have some previous knowledge of them before he receives the deputation on Wednesday next."

1529. Will you now read the suggestion?—First, to extend the laws which authorise compensation for malicious injuries to property to compensation for malicious injuries to the person. 2. Compensation to be levied by a house tax from all classes of occupiers in the district concerned, and to be collected specially by the police. 3. That the executive ought to have the power at once extended to it of enabling the magistrates and constabulary of any district upon requisition setting forth the necessity of the case, after information on oath, to search all suspected places at any time for arms (whether license has been given to the parties or not) as well as for documents that might lead to the detection of any conspiracy to intimidate or murder; and that the executive should have power to arrest parties strongly suspected of participation in such crimes under the warrant of the Lord Lieutenant, without relief of Habeas Corpus. 4. That a detective force for the several districts be organised; such a force having been found available in the Fenian conspiracy; and further, that resident magistrates should be entrusted with funds for the purpose of acquiring information of intended as well as perpetrated crime. 5. That when extra police are sent down to any district in consequence of outrage, the rate charged for them should be levied in the same way as we have suggested for compensation for injuries to the person. The above resolutions were unanimously passed at a meeting of magistrates held in the court-house, Mullingar, on Wednesday, 24th March 1869."

1530. Mr. Serjeant *Sherlock.*] How many magistrates were there present at that meeting?—I cannot recollect exactly, but there were over 40.

1531. *Chairman.*] Do you wish to make any observations on those resolutions to the Committee?—I look upon the area or the incidence of the taxation to be so faulty and so wrong as at the present moment to estrange the feelings and the loyalty of those who ought to be our best men, that is to say, the independent farmers of the country. It is within my knowledge now, for example, that at the present moment, from the taxes recently laid on certain districts for murder committed and other outrages, there are some of the best conducted men in my county becoming fast reduced in circumstances, and if it goes on they will be utterly smashed; while those escape with impunity who are in point of fact the concoctors and the executors of the mischief which is perpetrated.

1532. Do you refer to the police tax or the compensation for injury?—I refer to both. I know one farmer close to me who has the bad luck to live in the townland close to Ballinagore, where Mr. Perry's timekeeper was shot recently; that man told me the other day that his current tax was over 50*l.*, that he has been hooked in for

for all the taxes in that unfortunate district in which he lives.

1533. Sir *G. Grey.*] The proposal was to substitute for the present tax a house tax if I understand you rightly?—Precisely; I may mention that my own personal rate, my murder rate as I call it, will be over 19*l.* this half-year.

1534. What will that be for?—For the murder that I alluded to of the man Dowling, the timekeeper in the mill.

1535. Mr. *Chichester Fortescue.*] In consequence of the compensation given to the widow by the grand jury?—Yes; in consequence of the compensation given to her by the grand jury. That is a barony tax; we wished to circumscribe it, but we could not circumscribe it, knowing that the money compensation was 800*l.*, and if it had been circumscribed by the limits that we thought, in one sense it ought to have been circumscribed by, it would have smashed all the good farmers in the district.

1536. *Chairman.*] How many of those suggestions were entirely or partially adopted, and how many were not adopted?—Two of them were adopted.

1537. Which two?—The resolution to extend compensation for malicious injuries to property, to malicious injuries to the person, but it is the incidence of the taxation that I complain of.

1538. *Chairman.*] And the power of search has been extended, has it not?—We have found it very valuable to arrest parties out at night who were unable to give a proper account of themselves; that has worked remarkably well; we have got hold of some parties under that power that we should not have got hold of without.

1539. Are you still of opinion that the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act would be the most effectual remedy?—It is the only remedy that I know of.

1540. In your opinion are the magistrates and the police fully acquainted with the leaders of this secret society?—Yes.

1541. Are you personally acquainted with them in your district?—In my own district I am.

1542. You know who are the leaders in your own district?—Yes.

1543. What are the specific causes which induce you to attribute these outrages to the action of a secret society, and not to ordinary agrarian causes, such as have prevailed in Tipperary and other counties?—I think that where outrages are carried out by the Ribbon Society as a body there is an absence of all information, their system defies information; there are so many links, the one following on to the other, that they baffle all attempts to find them out. If two men fight and squabble amongst themselves and one kills another, we can get information enough about that, but a genuine Ribbon outrage, carried out by the instrumentality of the Ribbon Society, I have always found it impossible to trace.

1544. Or to obtain any information about it?—You may get information about one link, but that link will not tell you anything about the one that preceded it, or the one that followed it, or at all events not much about it.

1545. Has not that been the case also in cases of agrarian outrage in other counties?—I cannot speak with certainty with reference to agrarian outrages in other counties.

1546. In your opinion would the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act be only a temporary remedy, or would it last beyond the period of the suspension?—That would depend upon what powers are taken to suspend it; if you take power to suspend it for a year, and one or two parties I know were let out again, their subordinates would not give you any information about it, but if they were known to be in your power for two years, I think you might get information.

1547. You are of opinion that nothing will finally break up the society but obtaining evidence and conviction?—Society is strangled in my county by the Ribbon system.

1548. My question is this, do you think anything will completely break up the Ribbon Society except obtaining some convictions?—I think that if a few parties who are the leaders (and they are very few) of this society were arrested, you would find the rest of the society harmless.

1549. But you and your brother magistrates, I conceive, do not contemplate the perpetual suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act?—Certainly not; it is repulsive to any man's ideas and feelings.

1550. What reason have you to think that at the expiration of the period of suspension matters would not revert to their present state?—Because I apprehend that pending the suspension you would get a large amount of information which would enable you to prosecute certain parties whom you have not been able to get hold of yet.

1551. And to obtain convictions?—To obtain convictions undoubtedly if you prosecuted.

1552. Have you formed any opinion upon the probability of obtaining convictions from a Westmeath jury if sufficient evidence could be brought before them?—The action of juries has become very uncertain of late, but I think that if the Habeas Corpus Act was suspended they would return to their ordinary findings, that is to say on the evidence before them.

1553. Where strong evidence has been brought before a jury convictions have been occasionally obtained, have they not?—We have never had a conviction in the case of a true Ribbon outrage for 20 years. There was a case of firing at the person in this way; a certain police force was out on patrol, and they met with a party, and that party was suspected, but not proved, as I hold, to be the parties who had visited certain houses just before. The police made a dash at the party to arrest them for being out at night, and the party fired into the police.

1554. But in that case a conviction was obtained?—Yes, at the last assize; the man was taken red-handed. Mr. Townshend, the policeman, laid hold of the man; there was no doubt about it, he had him in his hand, but it was not proved to my satisfaction at all that they were the same party who had visited two or three houses before.

1555. But they were taken with arms in their hands at night?—Yes, they were.

1556. Is it not your opinion that they belonged to a Ribbon Society?—That might be, but I would not class that among outrages carried out under the Ribbon Society.

1557. What do you think is the shortest period of suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act which

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which would give general confidence, and enable some evidence to be obtained?—Two years.

1558. Mr. *Hardy.*] You live in the centre of these districts that are complained of?—I live in the focus of Ribbonism.

1559. Some questions have been asked by this Committee with reference to the wages paid to the labouring class, and with reference to their houses; can you give the Committee any information upon that subject?—I am one of the largest employers in the county, and I think I know all about that. Wages have risen very much in the time that I have been an employer. I recollect when men were to be had for 1*s.* in the summer, and 10*d.* a day in the winter, but the standing wages now would be for able-bodied men 9*s.* a week.

1560. Sir *G. Grey.*] For agricultural labourers do you mean?—Agricultural labourers.

1561. Mr. *Hardy.*] Do you yourself pay that amount?—I myself pay that with a house and garden. A casual man, who comes in with liberty to go again when he pleases, gets 9*s.* a week with a house, but without a garden.

1562. Have you built houses for your labourers?—I have.

1563. Is that state of things general in the county?—The average wages would be 9*s.* a week.

1564. Are you acquainted with any part of Westmeath in which a labourer constantly employed receives wages as low as 5*s.* a week?—Certainly not, except where he gets other things.

1565. There was an inquiry upon that subject previous to the bringing in of the Land Bill by the Assistant Commissioner and the Poor Law Inspector, was there not?—I could not speak to that exactly; that would be held in Mullingar. When I talk of the labour wages, I do not include the town of Mullingar. Probably you could always obtain cheaper labour in the town, in Mullingar, where there is a large pauper population floating about, but I am talking of the country generally.

1566. You would say that the ordinary average wages for a resident agricultural labourer was 10*s.* a week?—Yes; or from 9*s.* to 10*s.* a week.

1567. Is that about the average paid by other employers?—If you ask me generally about other employers, I should say that you could not get able-bodied men under 8*s.* at any time, much more in harvest and spring.

1568. We have had some statements made as to evictions and extermination of the population; is it within your knowledge that, during the 30 years you have been living in Westmeath, there have been cases of that sort to any great extent?—Do you refer to what is called wholesale evictions.

1569. I mean wholesale evictions?—I never knew of any; cases there have been of alteration of farms with purchases by the landlord from certain men who, owing to circumstances, could not be retained as tenants at the termination of the middleman's leases.

1570. But you are not acquainted with anything like wholesale clearances?—No, I know of nothing of the sort.

1571. Mr. *Bruen.*] You have given evidence with regard to the Ribbon system; your information, I presume, is the result of many inquiries that you have directed into it, and into outrages connected with it?—It is the result of experience extending over 30 years; we are constantly gleaning all the information that we can about it.

1572. Do you adhere to that statement that you made, that not one successful discovery and prosecution of a pure Ribbon outrage had been made for 20 years?—Those were not exactly my words, I think. I said, "An outrage committed under orders, and through the system of the Ribbon Society." Will you allow me to explain that an outrage may occur, and that all the parties concerned in that outrage may be Ribbonmen, but it does not at all follow that the outrage is perpetrated under the orders of the Ribbon Society. I think that I could name some outrages in which Ribbonmen were concerned, but which were not by any means perpetrated under the orders of their superiors.

1573. From the information you have received in those inquiries, could you give the Committee any short description of the mode in which a Ribbon outrage pure is connected, which will explain the reason why it cannot be detected?—Yes, I think so. There are those present who would know it as well or better than I do, but I have no objection to state what I think generally occurs. A certain man is to be punished for doing something that is considered an infringement of the law of the Ribbon Society. A subscription is raised to get this man shot; for example, the money would be lodged in the hands of some one belonging to the adjacent Ribbon Lodge perhaps, or some one in whom they can confide at all events. That party sends off to a different part of the country altogether for some one quite unknown to the locality, who probably never stood in that part of the country where the outrage is to be committed, who comes up and executes the person. That is the ordinary course of proceedings as far as we can learn of it.

1574. And therefore unless all the links in the chain combine together to give information no prosecution can be sustained?—No, it is impossible to sustain it, because the men who subscribe to get the act done have no idea at all of who does it any more than of the country he has come from. It does not follow that the man who fires at the other man knows the parties who subscribed originally to get it done, in fact, he is sure not to know.

1575. Then do you think that the effect of this impunity is that the Ribbon law actually dominates over the law of the land?—Thoroughly in my part of the country. I do not believe that any men consider much whether they are going to violate the law of the land about anything. The only thing they consider is, whether they are going to violate a law which is certain to bring its punishment after it, namely, the law of the Ribbon Society.

1576. In fact you consider, in the words of your resolution, adopting the words of the noble Chairman, "The state of the country is intolerable"?—It is intolerable. All rights of property and of employers have gone.

1577. Is it within your knowledge whether the grand jury, and others attending to public business, such as magistrates, have exercised and discharged their duties in fear of their lives; have they been threatened, or have they expressed a fear of their meeting with the vengeance of the Ribbon system in the discharge of their

their duties?—I do not think that the grand jury upon the last occasion expressed any fear of that sort, but the conduct of jurors and witnesses left no doubt, as far as they were concerned, that they were in very great trepidation indeed, in fact, we could hardly get a word out of the witnesses at the last assizes in the grand jury room. There was one notable case, in which I had to examine a man who had sworn positive informations as to his house being visited. He swore positively to four parties, but when he came into the grand jury room he began to get doubtful about the parties, and finally, by the time he got to the court, he never saw the parties before, and was prepared to swear it.

1578. Mr. *Downing.*] You stated, in answer to a question put by an honourable Member of the Committee, that you were not aware of any evictions; does that refer to the whole of that county, or to the district in which you reside?—I never heard of what is called wholesale evictions or clearances in Westmeath, or anything like what would justify the name of a clearance.

1579. Did you read the pastoral letter that was published by the Roman Catholic Bishop of Meath (Dr. Nulty) against the Ribbon societies of Westmeath?—I read that pastoral letter, but it did not strike me that the bent of that pastoral letter was against the Ribbon Society.

1580. You have read it, I presume?—It was put into my hands three days ago.

1581. The Rev. Mr. Nulty says that 700 beings were driven from their homes in one day; is that perfectly untrue?—I do not think it is possible that it could have occurred without my knowledge in my county, but his diocese, you will recollect, far extends beyond my county.

1582. It might have occurred in Meath?—I cannot say, and there is no date given to the circumstance; I can only say that nothing ever occurred in my county that would seem to answer that description at all; I cannot speak to other counties.

1583. The suggestions that were made by the magistrates in 1869, considering the period, were very strong recommendations, were they not?—That period was one of great anxiety to us; the station master at Mullingar, who had nothing to do with land, had just been murdered in a most brutal manner on the station.

1584. I merely say you will admit that they were strong measures?—I think they were strong, as the circumstances demanded that they should be.

1585. Do you know of any one of those 40 magistrates who met upon that occasion and made these strong recommendations to Government, having been injured on account of them?—I daresay on looking over the names I might be able to speak to that, but I cannot call to mind at the present moment any of them having been threatened or fired at on account of the part they took upon that occasion.

1586. You stated at the commencement of your evidence that you, a county magistrate, did not recognise attendance of resident magistrates at your meetings?—No; we look upon them as purely officers of the Government, as we look upon the chief of the police for instance.

1587. Is there anything like an unpleasant feeling between the resident magistrates and the local gentry in your county?—No; we have pulled together very well upon the whole, but they are looked upon as Government officers; they make their own reports of course, without reference to us with regard to outrages.

1588. Which you complain of?—No; I do not think that it is a subject of complaint; some years ago there was a little jealously perhaps, but I think that that has died out.

1589. You have given the Committee some very important evidence here, with reference to the area and incidence of taxation. I suppose you read the proceedings in Parliament during the passing of the Peace Preservation Act?—I believe I did.

1590. Are you aware that what you recommended actually passed the House of Commons; that it should be a house tax instead of a land tax, and that the next day the Government rescinded that provision, as they could not carry it out?—I know that it was stated that the Government wheeled round very short upon the subject.

1591. You remember that fact?—I remember it being stated; it is a very lamentable fact that they did so, because great injustice has been caused by the rescinding of it.

1592. Are you aware of the mode of valuation upon which the taxation is fixed?—There is one valuation for all purposes with us; it was first called Griffith's valuation, and it has gone under different names; it is now the basis of the income tax, poor law, county rates, and every other rate.

1593. Do you not know that in the case of a man holding 300 acres of land, his house may be valued merely at the nominal sum of 40 *s.*?—Very few men holding 300 acres live in houses worth only 40 *s.*

1594. Do you not know that the valuation of his house is a very small sum indeed as compared with the valuation of his land?—Yes, certainly.

1595. That in the case of a man who has 100 acres of land, his house might not be valued at 1 *s.* more than that of the man who had 10 acres of land?—Quite so.

1596. How would this system then be so ruinous as you say it must be?—The incidence of taxation brings it heavily upon land which cannot plot against the life, for instance, of a neighbour. Bullocks and sheep, for instance, do not plot against the lives of people; we think that the outrages committed are concocted in a very different class of house from that which you have spoken of.

1597. You are of opinion that taxation should reach the very smallest house; cases where a person might have a house and an acre of land?—I am of opinion that taxation should reach the residences of the parties who would be most likely to know of outrages, and that parties should not be punished for that which they could not know of.

1598. How could you recover from parties of that description a sum of 5 *l.*; would it not be perfectly useless to attempt it?—I would very much rather have a much smaller tax put upon those parties, who could prevent outrage, than upon those who could not prevent it, upon whom it is unjustly imposed.

1599. It was stated before this Committee by a resident magistrate, that he applied to Government to remit the tax from a great number of

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people on account of their poverty; would you therefore on the same showing levy the tax upon that very same class of people who are unable to pay it?—You are applying my observations to the murder rate, as I call it; but my observations were applied to the penal police rate. A police force is sent to a certain district for a certain specific time; in that case the large farmers pay the tax while the householders escape.

1600. It amounts sometimes to 5*s.* in the pound, does not it; we have returns to show that?—I do not recollect it amounting to anything like 5*s.* in the pound.

1601. With regard to the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act; if you had the Act suspended to-morrow, do you not think that the parties would leave the particular district and go to another, for I take it for granted that you do not intend to apply it, except to the particular county where the outrages exist?—Possibly they might.

1602. I mean taking your own individual opinion; would you have it applied to the whole of the county?—Our recommendation was limited to power being taken by the Lord Lieutenant to suspend the Habeas Corpus Act in certain proclaimed districts; those proclaimed districts might comprise a very small or a very large area; we did not dabble in that; but in certain proclaimed districts we recommended that that power should be given.

1603. I understood you to say that you do agree with the evidence given before the Committee yesterday, that generally speaking these murders are committed by parties brought in from another county?—I do, from another locality.

1604. Suppose you had the Act suspended to-morrow, do you not think that some of those parties you now refer to might leave the county of Meath and go to an adjoining county?—I wish they would; I think, probably, that they would go to America.

1605. Viscount *Sandon.*] Since the month of March 1869, when the deputation of magistrates went up to the Castle, has the state of Westmeath improved, or deteriorated?—I think it has been worse, probably for the last year, than I have ever known it.

1606. Have you made any fresh representations before this presentment from the grand jury upon that subject to the Government?—The date of the meeting I have spoken of was 1869; there was nothing between that and the resolutions of a county character; nothing emanating from the magistrates of the county, but many individual representations of course were made.

1607. Have many communications passed between members of the Government and the leading members of the magistracy upon the subject?—I could not speak with reference to that. as many magistrates might make communications of which I could not be cognisant.

1608. Have you reason to suppose that the Government have been in receipt of all the information which you have been able to give to the Committee during the last few months?—I should say that the Government ought to be in possession of a vast amount of information from the resident magistrates and the police force. None could be more efficient than the resident magistrates we have residing with us. I think that the Government ought, through their resident magistrates, to have been made aware of everything, and I presume that they have been.

1609. Mr. *Russell Gurney.*] I understand you to say that, in your opinion, the organisation of this Ribbon Society is very old; that the society has been long in existence?—Yes.

1610. Supposing that the Habeas Corpus Act was suspended, as I understand your opinion is, that the leaders would be got hold of?—Yes.

1611. Have you any reason to suppose that with such an organisation there would not be leaders appointed to succeed them?—No, I think there would not; because, although the organisation is large, and very extended, the leaders are very few; nor do I think that those young men who have unfortunately been forced into such an organisation would adhere to it after those men that led them into it were put up.

1612. Then you think that the mass of the members of the Ribbon Society are really opposed to the Ribbon Society?—The mass of young men who are forced to join the society very soon come to regret it.

1613. But the leaders are chosen by the parish masters and the body masters, as I think they call them; they would continue in existence, would they not?—I suppose that they would continue in existence; but the suspicion, when you got hold of the few real heads, would be so great, that these very men would turn upon them, and would break up the whole system.

1614. It is by long experience and by information of different kinds, that the police have become acquainted with who the present leaders are?—There never was much doubt about that.

1615. It has been known a long time, has it not?—Yes.

1616. Would it not take a long time again to ascertain who were their successors?—No; once those men were put up, as I before remarked, I think you would have ample information which would enable you to get further evidence of a very important character.

1617. You have known a time when the Habeas Corpus Act has been suspended?—Yes.

1618. You were in Westmeath at the the time when the Habeas Corpus Act was suspended, were you not; that was from 1866 to 1869?—That was not at all relating to Ribbonism. I say, that Act only related to political matters; that when a magistrate applied to Government to put that in force with regard to civil outrages, the Government said that they could not apply it to anything but political outrages.

1619. You think that, as regards the effect of the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, if it were passed in general terms, we have not seen the effect of it in consequence of the limited time during which it was applied?—It has never been tried.

1620. It has been applied for political offences, but you think that that is the reason why you cannot judge, from what was the effect then, of what would be the effect if it were applied to agrarian and non-political cases?—I think that the effect may well be judged from the fact that when all parties of every grade in Westmeath anticipated that such a power was to be taken in the Act of two years ago, we had an entire cessation of crime. All crime seemed to cease for a time; but when they found that that power was not in the Bill they began again, and they made up for lost time too.

1621. Did

1621. Did any of them leave the district under that apprehension?—They did not leave, but they behaved very differently from what they would have done.

1622. But the organisation remained the same?—Yes, the organisation remained the same, but outrage ceased.

1623. Were not the Fenians and Ribbonmen united, at that time, to a great extent?—Upon that subject there is a great diversity of opinion. I believe that any man would be taken into the Fenian body, but I do not believe that any man would be taken into the Ribbon body; far from it.

1624. Mr. *Plunket.*] In fact the strength of the conspiracy at present depends to a great extent upon the *prestige* of its leaders?—Yes.

1625. They trust, in fact, to their impunity?—To the certainty of their orders being carried out, and to the certainty of the parties carrying them out not being detected.

1626. This confidence in their leaders would of course be destroyed if some of them were arrested?—Naturally.

1627. Have you in your possession, or have you had at any time, a copy of the Ribbon oath?—I have it in the room.

1628. Will you mention to the Committee the circumstances under which that oath came into your possession?—After Mr. Anketell's murder a certain house near Mullingar was searched, and in this house was found not alone the oath which has been in print (I saw it the other day in the London papers), but certain instructions as to how to swear in the parties; I have it in the room; it was copied by a brother magistrate at the time, and sent to me.

1629. Will you read it?—These would appear to be mere instructions as to what should be done by the parish masters; it is headed "Obligations of a Ribbonman."

1630. Was that in writing or print?—I don't know. It is evidently instructions, for it begins, "The person is first asked by the captain or committee man, 'Is it your wish, with all your heart and mind, to assume the heavenly act of Ribbonman, or any other title you may get from the board?' The person answers, 'Yes.' The captain of the committee then says, 'Take the book in your right hand, and go down on your bare knees; you swear;'" and so it goes on with the oath.

1631. Will you read the oath?—Yes; "You swear that you will never prosecute a Ribbonman or any other title he may get from the Ribbon board, before judge or jury, or any man that can trust our system." The person then, if it is not his wish to receive the chief secrets, may rise and go away; but if he answers, "Yes," the captain orders him to bless himself, and take the book in his right hand; and he is then sworn as follows: "By virtue of the oath I have taken, I will aid and assist with all my might and strength, when called upon to massacre Protestants and cut away heretics, burn British churches, abolish Protestant Kings and Princes and all others, except the Church of Rome and this system; and by virtue of the oath I have taken, I will think it no sin to kill and massacre a Protestant whenever opportunity serves; and by virtue of the said oath, if I know any of the members of this system to be backward in executing any of the aforesaid orders, I will immediately make it known to the captain or the committeeman belonging to the Ribbon board; and by virtue of the oath I always will attend at one moment's warning to execute any commands belonging to the system, and that I will never see a brother hurt or abused by any not up to this system without assisting him, or will I buy anything from a Protestant at any terms if I can get it from a brother, and I also feel bound to believe that there is no absolution to be had from the Pope of Rome, or any other authority belonging to that Church, on any part of this solemn test, or any favour in this world, or that which is to come, for a breach of this test."

1632. Mr. *Russell Gurney.*] Was not any of that in print?—All that followed the directions was in print. I think Mr. Monk read it the other night in the House of Commons.

1633. Mr. *Pemberton.*] The result of your opinion is shortly that you see no remedy for this state of things except by the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act?—No other remedy.

1634. You say so, speaking from your experience of the partial suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, as far as it was applied formerly?—All remedial measures have so pressed upon the parties who were not the guilty parties, that I do not see what else can be done except to come down upon the guilty parties directly.

1635. And you would extend the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, as well to the Ribbon Society as to agrarian outrages?—I would extend it to all those outrages that have been the subject of the consideration of the Committee.

1636. Mr. *Gregory.*] Do you believe that the actual perpetrators of those outrages are those men who have been described as being the heads of the conspiracy, or do they keep aloof from the perpetration of the acts themselves?—The heads of the conspiracy never commit an outrage.

1637. Are those outrages, as a general rule, committed by what might be called servant boys and labourers?—The rank and file of the Ribbon Society is composed very much of the class you speak of; servant boys and railway labourers to a remarkable extent.

1638. One of the witnesses before this Committee described the condition of the labourers in Westmeath, to the effect that many of them were in a very wretched condition as regarded their habitations and mode of living; is that the case to your knowledge?—Certainly not; I do not know where he could have had his labourers from who said that.

1639. We have also heard that labourers can be procured; I am not speaking merely of the towns, but in the agricultural districts for from 10 *d.* to a 1 *s.* a day?—The women get that occasionally.

1640. Then you do not agree with that statement?—Not at all.

1641. When you speak of the average of wages being 9 *s.* a week, with a house and garden, are you speaking of the wages given by gentlemen like yourself of large means, employing a considerable amount of labour, or do you extend that observation to farmers?—Farmers sometimes find it more difficult to get labourers than we do; there is a bad feeling between the labourer and the farmer, which does not exist between the labourer and the gentleman.

1642. I presume from your answers that you would not wish that encouragement should be given to the farmers rather than to the landlords, for the erection of suitable dwellings for labourers?—I would encourage both; I would hope

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hope that under altered circumstances the farmers would employ more labour than they do now.

1643. Do you think that, as a general rule, the farmers would build houses and employ more labourers if encouragement were given them to do so?—Some of them with good leases would do so, I have no doubt.

1644. You spoke about the rise in wages; have you seen any statements of the Poor Law Inspectors to the effect that prices have nearly doubled between the years 1849 and 1869, taking as a basis the cost of maintenance in the workhouses?—I am so intimately acquainted with the labour question in Westmeath that I never look into those returns at all; I do not think that those who make them know as much as I do myself about it.

1645. But still I suppose that the cost of maintenance and the cost of food has very considerably risen with the increase of wages?—The cost of food has risen.

1646. And clothing?—No; clothing has not risen much, rather the other way; the cost of food has risen, but not at all in proportion to the hire, in no proportion at all to the value that is given for the money that is paid to the labourers in the present day; the man with 9 *s.* a week will not do anything like the work that a man did at 6 *s.* a week 15 years ago.

1647. You spoke of the rights of employers of property, and you stated that the rights of employers of property in Westmeath were altogether gone; I think that those were your words?—Yes.

1648. Perhaps the same state of things may also be said to apply to the tenant; they are also quite under a similar system of terror with regard to all the transactions of daily life?—Yes, certainly.

1649. And I gathered from you that there are many persons actually affiliated to these societies who would be the very first to rejoice at their suppression?—Yes, I believe that many young men, expostulated with by their clergy for example, when they first find out that they have joined, would willingly abandon it, but they cannot.

1650. The action of the clergy, I presume, has invariably been directed against these conspiracies?—It has been very much directed against those conspiracies, but it has been overcome.

1651. The Ribbon influence has overcome even the influence of the clergy?—Yes, it disregards it.

1652. You were speaking a short time ago of the conduct of jurors; do you attach any importance to the change of venue in trying persons for Ribbon offences, which is provided for under the 29th clause of this Act?—I think it would be most valuable to change the venue, judging from the conduct of jurors for some time past.

1653. In an emergency like the present (for I think we may consider this an emergency at present), would you be disposed to change the venue in all cases which are clearly Ribbon offences?—Certainly; but you will allow me to say, more especially to a town where the parties upon the jury would not be subject to the after consequences of the verdict.

1654. Have you heard of any instances of black mail being levied upon any landlords in the country with a view either to protect themselves, or to assist those persons?—I do not believe a word of it.

1655. Not in a single instance?—I do not think so. I have heard that one man paid a certain sum of money to get a ruffian away to America out of his neighbourhood; but I do not think that would come fairly under the head of black mail.

1656. Mr. *James.*] During the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act from 1866 to 1869, there were, we hear, a considerable number of Fenians arrested?—I believe so.

1657. Will you tell the Committee to whom was left the duty of pointing out the suspected persons; was that duty entirely cast upon the constabulary, or did the magistrates take part in advising who should be arrested?—We took no part whatever; it was left entirely to the officials and the constabulary.

1658. I presume you would know sufficient about the arrests to tell me this; do you know anything about a mistake being made, or a case in which it was thought that an innocent person had been arrested?—I could not call to mind any case, but very few were arrested in my county.

1659. You think that if the Act was properly performed, there would be no difficulty in selecting the persons who should be arrested?—I never heard it stated that the wrong man had been taken.

1660. You stated, with reference to the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, that if it is to be efficacious, there ought to be given a power of suspending it for a period of two years?—I think that a lesser period would not give confidence to anyone wishing to give information.

1661. You seem to think that the police and magistrates have ample information with reference to who are the members of the Ribbon Society?—Yes.

1662. They having that information, you would not require to obtain it from the Ribbonmen themselves?—But it is not information upon which you could convict.

1663. But there is no conviction required; what you require is to detain persons as a deterrent influence; why, if you have the information now in the hands of the police or the magistrates, would you require such a period of suspension as two years in order to detain a person?—Our great object would be to get such an amount of information as would break up the whole conspiracy; if, for example, you had only a suspension for one year, I do not think you would obtain such an amount of information as would enable you in any court of justice to prosecute with success.

1664. But when you say your object is to break up the conspiracy, I understand that the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act that you require is not for the purpose of keeping persons in detention all that time, but to enable you to convict parties?—To convict parties who are in gaol or at large.

1665. If you extended the period for one year without conviction, would not that serve your purpose without convicting the party?—The great object of every honest man would be to get rid of those men altogether who are misleading the men of the country.

1666. Agreed; but do you not think that that which has been always fixed as the limit, namely, six months, would carry that into effect?—I do not think so.

1667. There

1667. There is a clause in the Peace Preservation Act, the 25th clause, which is almost equal to the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act; it gives the power that any stranger sojourning or wandering in a district proclaimed, may be taken before a justice of the peace, and if he does not answer to the satisfaction of the justice of the peace he may be detained for an unlimited period; do you know whether that has been acted upon in Westmeath, or whether any arrests have been made under that section?—I do not call to mind any arrests that have been made under it.

1668. Mr. Serjeant *Sherlock.*] On the occasion to which you refer, when that document which you produced was found in the house near Mullingar, was there only that single document found?—I could not tell that; the document was sent to me by Mr. Swift.

1669. Then you could not say whether that was the identical document containing the oath with the preliminaries to which you adverted?—I could not say what was found.

1670. That was in Captain Talbot's district, was it not?—Certainly; close to his own residence.

1671. You yourself reside near there, I believe?—I reside about nine miles from there.

1672. Where are your petty sessions?—Kilbeggan.

1673. Mr. *Maguire.*] As I understand you, you state that a very large number of the people have been anxious to get rid of the terrorism of this conspiracy?—I think a great number of young men, yielding to the advice of their clergy, would be very glad to abandon the Ribbon Society.

1674. Those are the very persons who, according to your statement, forms the rank and file of the organisation?—Yes, the young men.

1675. I might presume, then, that their parents would be still more anxious to have that change effected?—Yes, no doubt they would be very anxious.

1676. Am I to understand from you that their parents take any part whatever in this illegality?—None whatever.

1677. That they are averse to it rather than favourable to it?—They are thoroughly averse to it, as I understand.

1678. Taking that statement as the basis of my question, how could you say it would be fair to impose a crushing tax in any given small area upon people who are averse to illegality, and have taken no part in it?—I advocate the very opposite to that. I wish to have the houses taxed in which the mischief is very often concocted, and where the parties reside who carry out these outrages.

1679. Take a certain district in which an outrage occurs; do you mean to say that the owners of all those houses have cognisance of any particular outrage, or sympathies with it?—We have very remarkable instances, not of sympathy exactly, but of cognisance of where outrages were about to be committed in villages; for example, we do not think that the farmers who have large farms have much to say to these cases.

1680. Suppose for a moment that at a little distance from a village, or any other place, an outrage occurs which is the result possibly of a quarrel, but still it is a desperate outrage; or suppose that a desperate outrage is committed by half-a-dozen people, but it is not plainly attributable to Ribbon organisation, would it be a fair thing to put upon that district a crushing house tax?—I do not know that it would be fair to put on any district a crushing house tax.

1681. But would not the imposition of a heavy tax upon a small area be more crushing and more disastrous in the form of a house tax than in the form of a land tax?—I think a poll tax, or a house tax, would be fairer imposition, because there you catch the class to which these men chiefly belong. I do not see the fairness of taxing a man with a farm of some 100 acres, who is innocent. I do not say it is not fair in regard to compensation, but in regard to the penal police force, and I say that that is ruining the best class of farmers, and making them disloyal.

1682. Would you give such a representation of your county as to say that, within any given area, there is not a large number of persons who are averse to illegality, and averse to outrage, and wish all that at an end; I am talking of large farmers as well as holders of land?—Of course there will be honest and proper people in all classes of society.

1683. In villages, as well as in purely rural parts, are there not many people who are averse to illegality, and who would do all they fairly could to put an end to it?—No doubt there are.

1684. Would you then mulct them severely because of terror or weakness of mind?—You cannot possibly put on any tax for such purposes that will not do some injustice somehow or other, but the greatest injustice that can be done is to tax the land which cannot have any cognisance whatever of the mischief that is going forward.

1685. But what is the difference between the house and land; a house does not conspire because it is a house?—No, but it holds those who do.

1686. But may not the land conspire too, that is to say, the parties holding it?—No, I do not think so.

1687. You think, therefore, that the small farmers have nothing whatever to do with it?—I cannot tell what evidence you may have with regard to that.

1688. Is that your belief?—Certainly not; but as you go up in the grade of farmers, when you get to the large farmers, there is less sympathy with this sort of thing.

1689. You were asked by the honourable Member for the county of Galway as to whether it was possible to impose a heavy tax upon occupiers of houses; is it possible to get it from them without their utter annihilation?—At the last grand jury, when this very question was canvassed, a grand juror computed what a poll-tax would have been in the barony, and found that in the barony which was taxed for the murder of Mr. Dowling, Mr. Perry's timekeeper, it was almost exactly the same thing. The poll-tax would be 6*d.*, as well as we could calculate it, and it was 6¼*d.* I think upon the valuation per acre.

1690. You were asked some questions in reference to wages; I wish to understand that matter rather clearly, because we received evidence upon that subject from the chief stipendiary magistrates, to whom you bear very proper testimony, that is to say, Captain Talbot, Mr. Reade, and Captain Barry, they are under the idea, and they stated to the Committee, that the

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average rate of wages would be about 6*s.* a week; do you apply your answer to the wages of persons employed by farmers or gentlemen?—The farmers have to pay more than we pay; but the farmers do not employ the men constantly.

1691. Is it within your knowledge that the farmer has to pay the men as long as he does employ them at the rate of 10*s.* a week?—I have known them give 4*s.* a day.

1692. In what time of the year was that?—During harvest time. I should state that farmers in my county are not employers of labour. They get their work done by what we know as farmer's boys, who live in the house.

1693. When they employ labourers, do they give them 10*s.* a week?—They give them more than that in harvest and at other times. They do not employ as a rule.

1694. But when they do employ, do you know of less than 10*s.* a week being paid by the ordinary farmers?—They cannot get them for less than 9*s.* The resident magistrates come from towns where there is a floating population. In Mullingar and Kilbeggan, and places like that, they would perhaps be glad to get 7*d.* a day.

1695. Do I understand you to say that the information of those resident magistrates is confined to the towns, and that they do not know what is going on in the county?—I do not suppose that they have much to do with the labour question in any way.

1696. Colonel *Wilson Patten.*] You have delivered in a paper to the Committee connected with a Ribbon Lodge in your neighbourhood. Have you any reason to believe that the proceedings of the Ribbon Lodges have been altered, and that their oath has been altered within any recent period?—I cannot say that the form of the oath has been altered, or that it has not. I think that there have been various forms of oath, but that the society is substantially what it always was.

1697-8. You told the Committee that you had very often had great trouble in inducing witnesses before the grand jury to give the same evidence in court as they had given in their informations; could you give any remarkable instances of that?—At the last assize I mentioned that there was one man who swore positively at home to four men whom he well knew, and had known for years, that came to his house, and when he came into court he did not know them at all.

1699. In your evidence you stated that the extra police tax should be levied by the extra police, and not along with the ordinary rates, as it is at the present moment; what is your reason for that?—We will take the last rate which has been struck for the murder of the man near me. That will go in with the county cess. The farmer that pays it will not distinguish it; he finds his county cess very heavy, but unless he inquires he will not know to what the increase is attributable. I say that whatever you do in that way should be levied by the police, and a receipt given, as for murder rate or a police rate, as it may be, distinctly. Now the man cannot understand why his rates are so heavy.

1700. Do I understand you to say that the extra police rate should be levied exclusively upon houses, or upon houses as combined with land?—It would be better to come upon houses as far as it could, a moiety might be levied upon houses, or at all events, a portion, but the present incidence of taxation is extremely faulty and bad.

1701. Is any portion of the tax now levied upon houses?—Yes, of course; what I object to is, that when a man pays his rates at the present day, the police rate is mixed up with the county rates, and he does not know what he pays for.

1702. Mr. *Solicitor General for Ireland.*] You said something with regard to the change of venue; can you point out to the Committee any instance in which there has been a miscarriage of justice in consequence of the venue not having been changed?—There has never been a successful prosecution in those cases; I do think that there was a great miscarriage of justice, if I am obliged to say so, in Supple's case, at the very last assizes.

1703. In Supple's case the jury acquitted the prisoner?—Yes, they acquitted the prisoner.

1704. Was not there a fair question before the jury as to the identification of the accused?—I do not think there was.

1705. Was there not an alibi given in evidence in favour of the accused?—I would not give much for an alibi.

1706. Whether you would give much for an alibi or not, was not there an alibi, at all events, attempted to be proved in his favour?—I believe there was.

1707. With respect to this question of the area of taxation, do you mean to say, gravely, that any farmer cannot distinguish when he is obliged to pay his rates, between the sum put on for crime and the sum he is obliged to pay for county cess?—There is nothing upon the face of his receipt to show it.

1708. Does not he know what his county cess is?—I suppose that he knows generally what it is, but our county cess has been enormously raised for Shannon drainages, which have never been carried out, and for lunatic asylums, and many other things.

1709. Your suggestion is, that it should be so apportioned that the farmer should know how much was the police rate, and how much was the ordinary county rate?—It would be very proper to do so.

1710. Have you any other suggestion to make to the Committee with reference to the area of taxation except that houses or persons should be taxed?—Of course the poll-tax is the fairest tax of all, where it can be levied.

1711. If you cannot levy the poll-tax, then we come to the house-tax?—Then we come to the house-tax, a moiety or some proportion, so as to come upon the guilty parties, should be levied.

1712. Have not the grand jury, under section 39, the power of levying this murder-rate upon the barony, half barony, or other portion of the county?—Yes; but will the Committee allow me to instance the case of Waters's murder. Waters was murdered in the barony of Moyashel, nine or ten miles' distance from where the parties lived who were the cause of the murder. Then there came a great difficulty upon the grand jury where to apportion this tax; it was a gross injustice to apportion it over the barony of Moyashel; we had no evidence that the barony of Moyashel had anything to do with it, but in the end we were obliged to levy it off the parish of Mullingar.

1713. Is

1713. Is it not the fact that compensation for the murder of Waters, amounting to 325*l.*, has been levied off the town of Mullingar?—The murder rate was put on the parish.

1714-15. What portion of it?—I do not know what portion of it; the parish of Mullingar is seven or eight miles from east to west.

1716. Had you any other case of a written oath except the one which you have produced?—I do not know whether I have at home, or not. Owing to certain circumstances, I have not been much at home lately.

1717. Have you any other oath different in form from the one you have produced to-day?—I have a recollection that I had an oath about the time we got a conviction against a man for carrying Ribbon signs, passwords, and so on.

1718. Have you got that with you?—I have not; my papers are in Ireland.

1719. I think you stated to the Committee in the early part of your examination that the Ribbon system has been growing in intensity for many years past, and that within the last 10 or 15 years it has reached its present state?—I think that its working has become a certainty.

1720. For how many years will you say that that has been so?—For several years past; I think it has amounted to a certainty.

1721. It is your judgment, as a county gentleman living in Westmeath, and having property there, that the Ribbon system has been working with certainty for the last four or five years at all events?—It has been working a great deal more than that, but in certainty and the perfection of its organisation it has increased until we do not know how to combat it.

1722. And it has been so increasing for the last five years?—Every day it becomes more and more perfect.

1723. Mr. *Chichester Fortescue.*] Do I understand you to say that at some period the Irish Government was asked by the Westmeath magistrates to apply the Lord Lieutenant's warrant under the Habeas Corpus Suspension Act to the case of Ribbon offenders?—They were asked by individual magistrates, but whether that was done in conversation or in writing I cannot call to mind. I think it would have been more in the way of a discussion.

1724. At what time was that?—It would be two years ago, I think, or something of that sort.

1725. You are aware that that Act expired in the month of March 1869, and therefore that application you have referred to was of course before that; would that assist you with reference to the date?—I am quite sure that what we thought was that the power was there when we asked for it, but we were told that it did not apply to Ribbon offences.

1726. Mr. *Disraeli.*] The question was when the suggestion was made to the Government?—I could not say without my papers.

1727. Mr. *Chichester Fortescue.*] It was while the Habeas Corpus Suspension Act was in force of course, otherwise that application would have had no meaning?—Yes, but whether the application was made by letter or *vivâ voce* I could not say.

1728. It was during the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, and at the time when the Lord Lieutenant was capable of arresting parties by his warrant?—Of course it was.

1729. And at that time some of the Westmeath magistrates were anxious that that suspension should be put in force in the case of Ribbon offences as well as Fenian offences?—They were very anxious for that.

1730. Who was the Lord Lieutenant at that time?—I can't recollect.

1731. You will probably remember that the Habeas Corpus Suspension Act came to an end in the very early part of the year 1869?—I do not remember that, nor can I remember speaking myself to Lord Spencer, on the subject, but I recollect that the magistrates I referred to were satisfied from some communication or other that the power was hardly there; the answer perfectly satisfied them that the power was not there, and that it was of no use asking formally for it.

1732. You are not sure whether it was in 1869 or in 1868?—It was more likely to be in 1868 than in 1869.

1733. You know that it could not have been later than the month of March 1869, as there was no suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act after that date; would not that assist your memory?—Of course it must have been before that.

1734. Mr. Serjeant *Sherlock.*] Was not it about the date of Mr. Fetherston's murder?—Yes, it was about April 1868; I think some one amongst us said that the power existed upon the part of the Government to suspend the Habeas Corpus Act in certain districts, and it was found that the Government did not consider that under the Act they had the power to do so.

1735. Mr. *Chichester Fortescue.*] There was a great feeling of horror upon the murder of Mr. Fetherston, which induced those magistrates to make that application?—Yes.

1736. Was that murder in your opinion connected with the Ribbon Society?—Yes; the man was got up from another county, as we supposed, to do it.

1737. The Westmeath magistrates thought that if the Lord Lieutenant could have issued his warrant under the powers which they imagined he then possessed, it would have been a very good thing?—It would have been very valuable.

1738. You mentioned just now an outrage which you thought was not a Ribbon outrage, for some reason which I did not understand, namely, the firing upon the police in the winter, do you know all the circumstances of that case?—Yes.

1739. Are you aware that Sub-inspector Townsend with his party was not at the spot by accident, but in consequence of private information which he had received?—Yes.

1740. Namely, that certain houses were to be visited by a certain armed party?—So I was informed.

1741. Do you also know that Sub-inspector Townsend had the presence of mind after this collision had taken place to send some of his men across the country to the houses of some of the men who he believed composed the armed party?—He did everything which pluck and presence of mind could dictate.

1742. And did the constables he so sent meet certain parties coming back to their houses armed in the early morning?—Yes.

1743. And then arrested them?—Yes; but

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that does not prove that they were the parties who visited the houses.

1744. You are aware probably that the magistrates imprisoned one of those parties for being out at night under suspicious circumstances?—Yes, under the provisions of the Peace Preservation Act.

1745. Still you do not think that that was a Ribbon outrage?—Men are out armed in my district frequently.

1746. Have you any instances that you can give to the Committee with reference to the outrages that have occurred in Westmeath of late years as to whether they have been of a Ribbon nature or not; I have a return which says that nearly 40 homicides have been committed in Westmeath during the last 20 years, and that only two persons have during all that time been executed for murder?—Those were the Crowleys.

1747. I was going to ask you about a few remarkable cases that have occurred within the last few years; I find that in 1858 that Edward Kelly, a respectable farmer, was waylaid and shot dead; he had taken some land which another was anxious to have; do you remember that case?—Yes, that was close to me.

1748. In your opinion, had that anything to do with Ribbonism?—Yes, it had; the right man was got there, but we could not make anything of the case itself; a man suspected was convicted for beating a herd upon that land, and unfortunately the Government of the day liberated him before his three years of penal servitude were out.

1749. In 1859 I find that Thomas Jessop, a farmer, was shot dead; he had taken a farm in connection with that for which Edward Kelly had been shot; was that a Ribbon murder?—Yes, that was a Ribbon murder. I called upon the Government of the day, when Jessop was shot, to prosecute, under what was then a recent Statute, 11 persons, who were present, or any of them that they might select as accomplices after the fact. There were 11 persons present upon the road when Jessop was shot; and after a great deal of communication with the Government, they said that they never could get a conviction against any of them in Mullingar, and that they would not prosecute.

1750. When you first knew the district, was Ribbonism then already rooted there?—Yes.

1751. Even when you first knew it?—Yes, in my childhood.

1752. Sir *G. Grey.*] Have rents been raised during the last few years?—Rents are seldom raised on large estates. My rents are what they were about 30 years ago. Griffith's valuation we called it; it was made about 1841. The tenants upon large estates are generally very liberally treated.

1753. Mr. Fetherston's was a large estate, was it not?—No, not so large as to rank with any of those which we call large estates.

1754. Should you say that the value of land had increased of late years?—A statement respecting that will be seen in this morning's "Times": In the case of land being wanted for a lunatic asylum, where one of the best land valuers we have got, actually says that the value of land has increased 50 per cent. during the last few years.

1755. Has the selling price increased?—You cannot sell land in Westmeath now; it is not a very desirable acquisition.

1756. How many years' purchase does it generally fetch?—I bought a great deal of land some years ago, independently of two estates that I inherit.

1757. And how many years' purchase did you give for it?—Twenty-two or 22½ years' purchase, I think.

1758. Do you think that land is actually unmarketable in Westmeath?—I think so; I know two estates that would be sold if anything like a fair price could be got, but I think nobody would bid for them.

1759. Mr. *Solicitor General for Ireland.*] Were the magistrates in Westmeath anxious at the time of Mr. Fetherston's murder for the power of taking up those Ribbonmen under the Habeas Corpus Suspension Act?—They were at all times very anxious to get some of the chief men

1760. Were you anxious at that time?—Of course we were.

1761. Did you express that anxiety to the Government at that time, or was it expressed to the Government?—I think we felt certain that the Government could not act upon it.

1762. Did you express your desire to the Government?—What would have been the use if we thought that they had not the power?

1763. Did not you say that some of the magistrates asked the Government to apply the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act to the Ribbon districts, under the supposition that it applied to such offences?—Yes.

1764. Was not that at the time of Mr. Fetherston's murder?—I could not put a date to it; but I think it would have been on account of the great sensation caused by the murder.

1765. The magistrates were told by the officials of the Government that the Act did not apply to such cases?—They were told by some one who ought to know; I cannot name the party, but I think that it was the Crown Solicitor, that the Act would not apply.

1766. Did you ever know any estates withdrawn from the Encumbered Estates Court in Westmeath on account of the petitioner not being able to obtain a fair price?—I think not; we have had very few sales under the Encumbered Estates Court in Westmeath.

1767. Mr. *Gregory.*] Has there been any attempt upon the part of landowners in Westmeath to take advantage of the clauses of the Land Act?—I do not know anything about it; we have never had a case.

1768. Mr. *Maguire.*] You told the Committee that every night people were out armed; why do not the constabulary take up those people who are caught out armed at night?—They cannot do everything. Patrolling has been going on in my county; the magistrates have been hard worked and the police have been walked off their legs; but I cannot speak to why they are not taken up.

1769. But you say that those people do go out armed at night; if you know that of your own knowledge, can you say why they are not taken up by the police?—The police do their best, but they cannot do impossibilities; five or six men in a barrack, hampered with regulations as to how many they are to leave in the barracks, and how many are to go out, have but a small chance of apprehending them.

1770. You referred, in some way, to the value of detectives; are you satisfied with the organisation

sation of the police force as applied to the detection of crime?—It is a splendid force, and a very fine military force; but it is perfectly useless for the detection of crime.

1771. Do you think that its military organisation is a great advantage?—I think that its military organisation destroys its value for the purpose.

1772. Mr. *Maguire.*] Can you suggest any alteration in the organisation of the police force, which will have the effect of rendering it more efficient for the detection of crime?—The police force is essentially unsuitable for the detection of crime; its very military character impairs its usefulness in that respect; they are a splendid body of men, the best conducted body in the world. I have no hesitation in saying, Let any man put a regiment of soldiers down in fives and sixes all over the face of the country, and see whether they would conduct themselves half as well as the police force of Ireland do; but they are unfit for the detection of crime.

1773. Are there no detectives, such as we understand by that term in England, sent to you?—There are what we call the "disposable men," and two or three of them are sent into the country. A man comes down with his hair cut short behind, and his very walk is recognised at the end of a mile upon the road. The country people immediately give the sign, and say, "What does that fellow want here? where does he come from?" I have often stopped a man upon the road who did not think I would recognise him, and have said, "You are a disposable man; where are you going to; where are you staying;" and the country people are sharper than I am.

1774. And you think that the system of detective police should be improved?—Certainly.

1775. Mr. *Solicitor General for Ireland.*] Are you aware that detectives have been sent down to Westmeath who are not drilled men, and have not their hair cut short behind, and who would not be recognised at the end of a mile by their military tread?—I have heard that.

1776. Do you believe it?—I do not know whether to believe it or disbelieve it, but the product seems very small indeed.

The Rev. JAMES CROFTON, called in; and Examined.

1777. *Chairman.*] You have some property in the county of Westmeath, I believe?—I am trustee to a very small property in Westmeath for my children and sister-in-law.

1778. You do not reside in Westmeath?—No; I reside at Dunlear, in the county of Louth.

1779. Some distance from the property?—It is about 90 miles by train, and 40 miles by road.

1780. Have you received threatening letters?—Never.

1781. You have been shot at?—I was shot at last March; five shots were fired at me.

1782. But you were not threatened first?—No, there was not even that courtesy shown me.

1783. Do you know why you were shot at?—Perfectly; I was raising the rents.

1784. You were raising, or had raised the rents?—I raised one man's rent, and I intended raising the rest, but they would not pay me. I wish to explain the circumstances to the Committee. In the year 1839, they paid, on the average, 1 *l.* 10 *s.* 3 *d.* for the land; my father-in-law reduced the rent, and before they fired at me it was 1 *l.* 2 *s.* 11 *d.* The farms had improved. I hold land myself, and I was perfectly well aware that they ought to pay more rent than they did in 1839. I only wanted to raise them to 1 *l.* 6 *s.*; and the reason I fixed upon that sum was, not that I believed it to be the full value of the land, but I held a farm from Mr. Smith Barry, of Cork, and that was the proportion over the Government valuation that I paid myself, and I wished to do to others precisely as I was satisfied others should do to me, and so satisfied am I with my rent that if Mr. Smith Barry had another farm to let at the same rent, I would be very glad to have it, and thank him for giving me the farm.

1785. In consequence of these proceedings you were on bad terms with the tenants?—I was very polite. I never lose my temper.

1786. You say that you were not threatened. Did you know that you were in any danger?—No; 10 minutes before I was fired at I went into the house to give a poor woman 1 *l.*; her husband was sick.

1787. You had not been cautioned?—No; not at all.

1788. Were these five shots all fired on one occasion?—In a moment. I was walking along the road, it was eight in the evening, and dark, and two fellows came up, meeting me, and had hardly passed me when I felt a rap upon the shoulder, and heard the report of a revolver; so unprepared was I for it, that I turned round and said, "You fools, what are you firing at me for?" I thought they took me for a gentleman in the neighbourhood who had police guarding him; and they fired two revolvers at me, and missed me; and then I turned and walked on the way I was going, and one came after me, fired at me again, and missed me, and I turned on that fellow; he was a fellow about 25 years of age, and he escaped me. I turned again to go on my road, and then the second man turned to me in the ditch and fired at me, and he missed me.

1789. You were not wounded severely, I believe?—No, only bruised.

1790. The powder was bad?—No doubt; or the revolver was no good.

1791. Waters was shot for what cause?—Waters was employed by my attorney to serve an ejectment on the father of the famous Captain Duffy.

1792. Is Duffy one of your tenants?—He is the son.

1793. Waters was shortly after that shot?—No; it was in the month of December that Waters was shot.

1794. Shortly after serving the notice?—About four days before the trial was to come on he was shot.

1795. Do you believe this to have been a murder planned by the Ribbon Society?—Of course; I cannot tell, but it is the impression on my mind that he was shot simply because he served that notice of ejectment. He was a process-server, and other papers that were in his pocket were not taken, but the book which contained the entry of the ejectment service was taken away.

1796. Sir *G. Grey.*] The object was to prevent

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evidence being given of service at the trial?—Yes, of course.

1797. *Chairman.*] Do you believe you were shot at by the order of the Ribbon Society?—Yes; I suppose when the captain gave the order it might be said to be the order of the society; there is no disguising the thing; it is a fight between me and the captain of the Ribbonmen.

1798. How do you know it is not a fight between you and your own tenant?—Because that man is well known by the name of Captain Duffy, and by no other name.

1799. Cases of agrarian outrage of this kind have happened frequently, have they not, in other parts of Ireland, in Tipperary for instance?—They were some in Tipperary, but I believe they are pretty quiet there now.

1800. But they were not generally traced to the operations of a secret society, were they; is it not supposed that these outrages were usually committed by the man himself who felt aggrieved?—In Ireland we generally consider that there is a ramification of the thing, but there it is quieter at one time than another.

1801. You have no doubt in your mind that a secret society exists in Westmeath?—I have not the least doubt at all of it; it is rampant in Westmeath.

1802. You know pretty well who are the leaders of it?—I suspect them; I cannot prove them to be the leaders of it.

1803. Have you ever considered what measures will be necessary to put a stop to this organisation?—I think it can very easily be put a stop to, if the Lord Lieutenant is allowed to suspend the Habeas Corpus Act over small districts by way of experiment, and if the Land Act is suspended along with the Habeas Corpus Act, and the time for serving notice to quit, is limited to a month; and, of course, the usual time for notice of ejectment; then when the men are put out, the police tax should be imposed upon any townlands where they are harboured. They would then be driven into the poorhouse.

1804. Do you refer to the whole of the people of the townland?—The people of the townland. The Lord Lieutenant will be well informed what townlands it should be done upon; when that is done, if I have any notices to serve, I will lend my aid with all my heart to do that upon one condition, that the Government then steps in and gives these men with their families free passages to America, or, at least, to Canada; that they shall be sent where land is offered, and pressed upon people, and there each man, no matter what he would be entitled to get at home, gets 70 *l.* given to him in Canada to set him up; let the money be paid, half by the county, and half by the landlord.

1805. Who is it that you suggest should be sent to Canada?—The persons who are ejected; it will depend upon the Lord Lieutenant what townlands he suspended the Habeas Corpus Act over. He would not do that without proper information that the people in those townlands were the disturbers of the county, and in three months you would have Westmeath as quiet as it could be.

1806. You propose that the inhabitants of small townlands, where an outrage takes place, should be deported to Canada?—I do.

1807. At the public expense?—No; let the landlords pay half and the county pay half. The landlord will be benefited by getting rid of them, and the county will be benefited by getting rid of them also, and the men themselves will be benefited.

1808. I believe you have served a notice to quit upon Duffy, after all, have you not?—I was obliged to do it myself. I could not get the process-servers in Westmeath to serve Duffy with a notice, and I was obliged to turn process-server myself, and billsticker. I went three days running with great protection from the police to the house. I could find no one there, and I then stuck up a notice upon the church door and upon the chapel door, and house door.

1809. Did you see the tenant?—No; we searched every place for the tenant, but we could not get him.

1810. Are you under the protection of the police at home?—Yes; even in the quiet place of Louth; there are two policemen relieved every three hours watching me. If I go to a fair, the police follow me, and protect me.

1811. Mr. *Chichester Fortescue.*] You are not afraid of the Louth people?—Not in the least. When I went back to Dunbar, my own parish priest and half of the town were up at the station to meet me as a sort of ovation; they know perfectly well from 30 years' experience of me that I am neither doing anything harsh nor cruel.

1812. *Chairman.*] You have some farms in your own occupation in Westmeath, have you not?—I have some farms that I hold from Mr. Smith Barry, but not in Westmeath, and I pay more rent than I am asking my tenants for, but I wanted to put them on the same ground precisely as I am on with regard to the Government valuation.

1813. Will you tell the Committee what is the usual rate of wages in the county of Westmeath?—I do not know anything about the rate of wages in Westmeath.

1814. Mr. *Chichester Fortescue.*] What amount of increased rent were you requiring from this tenant whom you had to serve in person, as you told the Committee?—13 *s.* 6 *d.* per half year; that was the whole amount of increase, and he could pretty well afford to pay it, for he offered to drive me on his jaunting car from Tyrrell's Pass to Mullingar, for the purpose of saving me 5 *s.*

1815. How much land would his father hold?—Twenty-three or 24 acres.

1816. Your notice to quit, which the unfortunate man Waters tried to serve, and which you have since served yourself, was in consequence of the tenant's refusal to pay a small increase of rent?—Exactly.

1817. You were not turning him out for any other reason?—Now I am.

1818. No doubt, but originally, you were not?—Had he not shot Waters, I would not have turned him out. Here is a letter from the gentleman himself, saying that he would settle with me (*producing a letter*).

1819. I want to know whether I am right in my interpretation of the recommendation which you made just now to the Committee; I understand you to mean that if the Lord Lieutenant had the power of arresting a few of those persons under his warrant, you are not in favour of simply detaining them in gaol, but having arrested them under that power you would wish him to send them and their families at the public expense

to

Rev. *J. Crofton.*

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to Canada?—I would not like to see that done; what I say ought to be done, is this: give the Lord Lieutenant a power of suspending the Habeas Corpus Act over a small district, even a townland, or two or three townlands, no matter where they are scattered; the police will tell him where the troublesome people reside, and then whatever power the Lord Lieutenant gets, let him have the power of suspending the Land Act at the same time.

1820. I am not going into that. The power you refer to is simply the power of arrest without trial, but when those parties have been arrested under this warrant, what is the Lord Lieutenant to do with them; in your opinion, is he to keep them in prison, or to send them off?—If he were to keep them in prison, the moment they came out they would be 10 times worse.

1821. Then the Lord Lieutenant is to send them to America?—I would recommend any plan of sending them to America. Perhaps it would be rather a serious thing to give the Lord Lieutenant power to send them to America.

1822. Mr. *Solicitor General for Ireland.*] What do you think would be the effect of a simple suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act for two years, and then to let the men out into Westmeath again?—The result of that would be that they would come out foaming at the mouth like mad dogs.

1823. Mr. *Gregory.*] Do you think that you will be able to let that farm of yours, supposing you eject this man?—Certainly not; no man in Westmeath would dare take it. I was politely turned out of the "Greville Arm's" in Mullingar; the widow who keeps it was actually afraid to keep me there. In addition, I would suggest that the police should be allowed to serve all notices, for that would save a great deal of bloodshed.

Friday, 24th March 1871.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. Bruen.
Mr. Disraeli.
Mr. Downing.
Mr. Chichester Fortescue.
Mr. Gregory.
Sir George Grey.
Mr. Russell Gurney.
Mr. Hardy.
The Marquis of Hartington.
Mr. James.
Mr. Maguire.
Colonel Wilson Patten.
Mr. Pemberton.
Mr. Plunket.
Viscount Sandon.
Mr. Serjeant Sherlock.
The Solicitor General for Ireland.

THE MARQUIS OF HARTINGTON, IN THE CHAIR.

Mr. WILLIAM MOONEY, called in; and Examined.

Mr. *Mooney.*
24 March 1871.

1824. *Chairman.*] WHAT office do you hold in Ireland?—I am Clerk of the Crown.

1825. For what county?—For the county of Westmeath.

1826. How long have you held that office?—For about nine years.

1827. The *Solicitor General for Ireland.*] I believe that that is a permanent office?—Yes, it is.

1828. A non-political one?—Quite so.

1829. Will you inform the Committee what are the duties of the office of clerk of the Crown?—I have merely to receive from the magistrates' clerks copies of informations which are returned for trial, or rather the original depositions, to furnish copies of them to the Crown solicitor, and to record the verdicts of the juries at the assizes.

1830. In point of fact you sit at the assizes under the judge as a sort of judge's registrar upon the criminal side of the court?—Quite so.

1831. I believe you are also a practising attorney and solicitor in large practice in Westmeath, Dublin, and the adjoining counties?—I am.

1832. And your practice extends among all classes of the community, does it not?—It does.

1833. How long have you been in practice as a solicitor and attorney?—More than 20 years.

1834. And you have acquired a considerable knowledge of the people around Mullingar and Westmeath?—I have.

1835. Are you aware of the existence of a society called the Ribbon Society, in the county of Westmeath?—I believe that such a society exists.

1836. According to your information or knowledge, has it any political or religious significance at all?—In my opinion, none whatever.

1837. According to your judgment it partakes more of the nature of a social conspiracy?—Entirely so.

1838. When you first became acquainted with that society, from general rumour and other sources of information, what was its principal object and aim?—Its principal object and aim was to prevent landlords from ejecting small tenants or from raising their rents.

1839. Are you of opinion that it has extended the scope of its operations of late years?—It has.

1840. It now, I believe, interferes in nearly every relation of life, in that of master and servant, and other matters of that sort?—It does.

1841. Has the society given up interference in questions of property between landlord and tenant, or has it embraced the other objects as well?—I should require to explain that. My idea of it is that dating from or about the murder of the late Mr. Fetherston, that was in the spring of 1868; it was then that it assumed a new character, and I think that it is to a considerable extent owing to the fact that no provocation has been received from the landlords, inasmuch as there have been practically no evictions, and no attempts to raise rent since that time.

1842. I suppose that during the last few years you have been aware of threatening letters having been received?—They have been very numerous indeed.

1843. Do those threatening letters principally relate to land?—They do.

1844. Is there any dissatisfaction felt among the members of the fraternity with reference to using land for grass land instead of for agricultural purposes?—There is, but that applies much more to the county of Meath than to the county of Westmeath.

1845. Do you believe that the Ribbon conspiracy exists in Meath, and in the portions adjoining Westmeath?—Yes.

1846. Do you know King's County?—I do.

1847. Do you know the Barony of Kilcoursey?—I do.

1848. Do you believe Ribbonism exists in parts of King's County?—I do.

1849. That is the part of King's County bordering on the county of Westmeath?—Yes. I should say, with respect to the general question, that I have heard it doubted whether there is an executive and a central authority of the Ribbon Society; my own opinion is that there is, but I have heard it very much doubted, and

I have

I have heard it stated that it is merely persons in different parts of the country who have the command of bad characters to execute their own decrees.

1850. Are you aware whether the Ribbon conspiracy interferes in the matter of servants, and herds, and people of that class?—I think so.

1851. Why are you of opinion that there is a central authority?—My reason for that is this, that unless there was some central authority I cannot conceive how it is possible that strangers could be brought from a distance to commit outrages, in the result of which they themselves individually can have no interest whatever. I think that that requires combination, and a very perfect combination.

1852. Have you any idea where the central authority is situated?—Not the remotest.

1853. Have you any idea whether it is situated in Westmeath, or beyond the boundaries of Westmeath?—I have not the slightest idea.

1854. Have you received any threatening letters yourself?—I have.

1855. Was that in relation to land?—It was.

1856. Was that in your capacity of landlord or as a professional man?—As a professional man.

1857. For doing what?—I applied in November 1869, for payment of rent. The tenants to whom I refer had previously sent a memorial to their landlord, which was half threat and half entreaty, requesting him to reduce the rent to the standard at which it had existed 15 or 16 years ago; he did not reply to the memorial, but instructed me in November 1869, to inform three or four of the principal of the tenants, that if they did not pay the half year's rent that was due the previous May, he would take proceedings to enforce the entire year's rent; it was in answer to that application that I got one of those threatening letters.

1858. Will you produce that letter?—I will; it is dated the 28th November 1869.

1859. It is in a sort of printed character I see?—It is, and it is remarkably well written; it is not written by an illiterate person—(*Letter produced and read*).

1860. That letter is posted at Athlone?—It is.

1861. There are some eccentricities of spelling in that letter, I see?—That is done purposely, I think, by the man who wrote the letter; there are only two or three words mis-spelt in it.

1862. Do you consider that that was intended as a serious threat?—It is very difficult to tell; it is almost impossible to tell, but my opinion is that the writer of that letter did not intend to do personal injury to me, but that his object was to endeavour to frighten the landlord, who was a non-resident proprietor.

1863. Where did the landlord live?—In London.

1864. I believe one portion of Athlone is in Westmeath?—Yes; the River Shannon divides at Athlone the counties of Westmeath and Roscommon.

1865. Was that letter sent to you merely for exercising the ordinary duties of your profession?—Yes, it was for writing a letter, requesting the tenants to pay their half-year's rent due the previous 1st of May.

1866. Does this conspiracy, in your judgment, extend over the whole of Westmeath?—It does in my opinion.

1867. And are there parts of Westmeath worse than others, as far as the conspiracy is concerned, in your judgment?—I think there are.

1868. Does it extend to the portion of Meath adjoining Westmeath?—Yes, I think it does.

1869. And to the portion of the King's County also adjoining Westmeath?—Yes, I think it does.

1870. Do you know the county of Meath very well?—Yes, I do.

1871. Do you know the portion of Meath bordering on the sea?—Yes.

1872. Is that part, in your opinion, quiet and well disposed?—It is.

1873. You state that you know the portion of King's County adjoining Westmeath?—Yes; I think the portions which are the worst are the portions adjoining Westmeath.

1874. Did it ever occur to you to speculate on the causes that led to this state of things?—I have no doubt that the Ribbon organisation was principally intended to control the acts of the landlords.

1875. That was the origin of it, was it?—Yes, and I have no doubt that their acts, as against landlords, had the sympathy of the tenant class generally, including the large tenants.

1876. You say, in point of fact, that men sympathised with the Ribbon organisation who were not members of it?—Yes, most decidedly.

1877. And they were not inclined to give information to the executive Government?—Certainly not.

1878. Or to take any part in procuring any evidence for the detection of Ribbonism?—Certainly not. My opinion is, that those large tenants, and those persons of whom I have spoken, a great many of whom had, most unquestionably nothing in the world to do with the organisation, considered that not having any redress by law in the event of their own landlords either dispossessing them, or raising the rents, the acts of the organisation had the effect of preventing their landlords from exercising the strict rights of property in their own regard.

1879. They considered it a check upon eviction?—They considered the acts of the organisation a check upon eviction or the raising of rents.

1880. I suppose they object as much to raising the rents as to being turned out of their land?—Nearly as much.

1881. Do you think the population have in any way yielded or submitted to the demands of the Ribbonmen?—Yes, I have no doubt they have.

1882. Do you consider that the landlord class have submitted to the demand of the Ribbonmen?—Yes, I think so, just as much as the tenants.

1883. In what way, for instance?—Of course when I mention this I am not stating a matter within my own knowledge.

1884. Of course the Committee understand that you are only stating your belief and opinion?—Yes, what is popularly supposed in the country. I think the landlords are afraid of the organisation.

1885. Is there a system of terrorism prevalent which extends over the districts?—I think there

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is a system of terrorism prevalent, and it is supposed that men of considerable influence retain persons who are supposed to be Ribbonmen in their confidential employment. I am not stating this as a matter of fact. I wish to be understood that I do not cast any reflection upon any person for doing it, but that is supposed to be done.

1886. With what object is it supposed that they retain those men in their employ?—To ensure their own protection; and that if there is anything going wrong they will hear about it.

1887. In what capacity are those men employed who are connected with the Ribbon organisation, and who are thus retained by men of higher station than themselves?—As herds very often, and stewards.

1888. Do you believe that there are any gentlemen of position and influence in Westmeath who retain in their employ herds or stewards whom they believe to be Ribbonmen?—They have them in their employment. They are known to be Ribbonmen, or are supposed to be Ribbonmen; but I will not undertake to say that the parties themselves know that.

1889. Are you aware whether men connected with the Ribbon conspiracy have ever in any way complained of the administration of justice at all in their localities?—Quite the contrary.

1890. How do you explain that; you state that they do not complain?—No; I think that the system of terror has extended to the acts of the magistrates as such frequently.

1891. Do you mean by that that they favour men who are Ribbonmen?—It is supposed that they frequently get off more tenderly than people who are not tainted with Ribbonism; it is the popular belief that that sometimes occurs, but I do not vouch for the fact from my own knowledge.

1892. Do you think that that feeling tends to increase and strengthen the Ribbon organisation?—I have not the slightest doubt in the world that it does.

1893. Do you think that a man by joining himself to a confederation of that kind imagines that he acquires a potential voice in the regulation of affairs?—Yes, I do.

1894. Have you turned your attention at all to the consideration of the best remedies for this state of things?—I have; I have thought over the matter frequently.

1895. You live in Mullingar, do you not?—I live about a mile from the town of Mullingar; I have lived there for a long time.

1896. For how many years have you lived there?—I have lived permanently for the last 15 years, in the very centre of this district. I wish to mention also that with respect to Ribbonism affecting the acts of magistrates, that I do not give that as more than the popular feelings. I have not been in a petty sessions court more than once in 12 months. I only say that there is a feeling of the kind abroad.

1897. You have turned your attention, you say, to the means of repressing that evil?—Yes, I have.

1898. What do you consider would be the best means of applying a remedy?—My opinion has always been that an efficient police force, and a fearless magistracy, are quite capable of dealing with the conspiracy.

1899. What do you mean by an efficient police force?—I consider that the present police force is not a police force at all, it is a military force.

1900. Do you think that its military organisation detracts from its efficiency in tracking and detecting crime?—I do; the constabulary officers are also really military officers, and they think as military men; they assume all the airs and importance of officers of the line, with a great many exceptions, of course.

1901. You are speaking of the general rule?—Yes; as a general rule. They are frequently the sons of persons of good families, and they go into the force after passing a competitive examination, and certainly they are not, and, in my opinion, they do not consider themselves, as detective or preventive officers.

1902. Do you think that they consider that sort of work below them?—I do; and then as regards the constabulary, they act in bodies more or less, and are obliged to take orders for everything. If anything occurs the matter is reported to one officer, and he reports it to his superior, and so it goes on. They do not act individually.

1903. You think that the force, so far as its authority is concerned, is too much centralised?—I think so; it is too much of a military force. As regards this conspiracy, assuming that it exists, and that the members of it are numerous, they are, beyond all question, from the humbler classes, and it is inconceivable, in my mind, that an efficient police force, provided with money to procure private information, could not procure it so as to anticipate the commission of outrages, or to catch the offenders almost in the act. I am perfectly aware that after a murder, or after the perpetration of any serious outrage, no amount of money will induce a man to come on the table to give evidence; but, as I said before, it is inconceivable to me that a proper detective officer, provided with money, and each man acting to a certain extent upon his own responsibility, and using his own ingenuity, would be unable to get private information which would frequently enable him to defeat the intentions of the conspirators.

1904. Sir *G. Grey.*] You refer to intended crime?—To intended crime.

1905. The *Solicitor General for Ireland.*] Do you know that such information has been obtained?—Yes.

1906. And that it has been effective?—Yes, it has prevented crime. Sometimes.

1907. Do you know that money is placed at the disposal of the police?—I have heard so.

1908. And that it has been effectively used?—Yes, occasionally; but unless the policemen will mingle with the people, and use their ingenuity to procure private information from them, they will not get it, because the people will not come, except in rare instances, to the police to give information.

1909. When you say "mingle with the people," do you mean when they are in uniform?—No, that would be no use.

1910. But when they are acting as detectives?—Yes.

1911. So as not to be recognised as policemen?—Yes.

1912. Do you think that that is possible to be done?—Yes, I do.

1913. And not to be recognised as members of the police force?—Yes; I think it is quite possible for a policeman, whether he is known in the

the country, or whether he is not, by some means or other to get into communication with a person likely to give him information.

1914. You are of opinion that a policeman stationed at Mullingar, or any of the adjacent stations round Mullingar, dressed as an ordinary countryman, could mix with the people at the fairs and markets, and get information from them; is that what you mean to state to the Committee?—No, that is not what I mean.

1915. Do you refer to a stranger policeman?—I do not care whether he is a local or a stranger policeman; but I think whether a meeting is to take place by night or day a clever policeman could bring it about.

1916. So as seriously to interfere with the acts of the conspirators?—Yes.

1917. Do you mean that those men should be in the character of detectives?—I do; I think that the duty of a policeman, as distinguished from that of a military man, is that he should himself endeavour to search out crime.

1918. Do you mean that these men are to act purely detectively?—I think there ought to be a detective machinery attached to the police.

1919. When you say that the police should mix with the people, I do not understand you to say that they should mix with them as policemen?—No.

1920. And that they should not mix with them as policemen in the garb of civilians?—No.

1921. But that they should be able to mix with them upon other terms?—Certainly they should.

1922. Could that be done by policemen quartered in Mullingar, or in that locality?—In my opinion it could. What I wish to convey to the Committee is, that in my opinion a policeman in Westmeath should act as such, contradistinguished from a soldier, and that he should individually, and to some extent on his own responsibility, and using his own wits and ingenuity, endeavour to detect and track out criminals, and also, by obtaining information, endeavour to anticipate and prevent crime. I should have supposed that every one would have a general idea of what a perfectly efficient policeman, whether detective or not, should do; but the Committee can hardly expect me to go into every detail of what such a man should do and what he should avoid doing, so as to be successful in his calling.

1923. I should have thought the countrymen would have known the policemen they had been in the habit of seeing?—Yes, certainly they would, but you can imagine, no doubt, a policeman sending a messenger, or by some other means asking a party who could give information, to have an interview with him at some out of the way place of the country.

1924. But would not the party then have an interview with the policeman in his character of policeman?—Yes; but I understood you to ask whether that could be done publicly, which is a very different thing.

1925. Do you know whether detectives have been made use of in Westmeath?—I have heard that after some great outrage they have been sent down to procure evidence to establish a conviction in that particular case, but I never have heard that they have been employed in Westmeath as a system.

1926. But might not men have been employed on the part of the police, as detectives in Westmeath, for tracking out crime, without coming to your knowledge?—Certainly; it is no part of my business to inquire; it may have been done for all I know.

1927. Do you think that a military police force has any advantages in a place like Westmeath?—I think it has immense advantages when the object is to repress an insurrectionary movement.

1928. But you think that for the detection of crime a military force is not necessary at all?—I will not say that there are never events which do not partake of an insurrectionary character in which the police, as a military force, are not very useful.

1929. They are very useful in that capacity, are they not?—They were formerly, but they have not been so much called upon recently.

1930. What would you suggest as an alteration in the police force to make it as efficient as you say it should be, according to your own ideas?—I think I have given the Committee my views already; my idea is, that there should be a detective department connected with the present existing force, and that those men should have authority to use their wits.

1931. Do you mean a local detective force?—I do.

1932. Not merely men sent down from Dublin after a crime has been committed?—No, that is of no use; they might as well stay there.

1933. Are you aware that there is a detective force connected with the constabulary, presided over by efficient officers?—I have heard that, but my belief is, that they are only sent down occasionally; there is no permanent detective force, for instance, in the county of Meath or Westmeath that I am aware of.

1934. But do you not think that a permanent detective force stationed in the county of Meath or Westmeath would very soon become inefficient from being known to the country people?—It would, more or less, but those men could be changed from time to time. I wish to state that the existing police force, even without a separate detective system, if properly remodelled, and if the men were made to act as policemen, according to the usual acceptation of that word, a great improvement might be effected. It is to the organisation of the force, and not to the men composing it, that I object.

1935. What did you mean by saying when you talked about the police force "and a fearless magistracy"?—I mean that the magistrates should deal with every case brought before them regardless of the question of Ribbonism; that there should be no fear of it upon their minds.

1936. Do you think that there is such a fear existing at present?—I do not say it always exists, but I believe in the existence of it.

1937. Have there ever been any attempts in the county, to your knowledge, to defeat this organisation by the efforts of the well-disposed respectable classes?—There never has been.

1938. Do you think that such a thing would be possible at the present time?—I think it was quite impossible heretofore.

1939. What do you mean by "heretofore"?—I mentioned in the early part of my examination that I considered that a large portion of the

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population, even the respectable portion of it, sympathised with the objects of Ribbonism, or rather that they thought they tended to their advantage in preventing the landlords from exercising the rights of property in their own regard. I think that at the present time, inasmuch as the law, owing to a recent change which has been made in it, affords considerable protection to the tenants, it is more likely that a combination to resist the Ribbon Society could be formed than heretofore; whether it could or not is mere matter of speculation.

1940. By the change in the law you refer to the Land Act?—I do.

1941. Do you think there has been a better feeling between the tenant and the landlord since the passing of the Land Act?—I think so; I know that a tenant now receiving notice to quit, does not regard it with the same consternation as heretofore. He now at once consults with reference to what steps he should take for the purpose of being paid the compensation that the law affords him.

1942. Consults whom?—He takes professional advice.

1943. You think that that is preferable to consulting the Ribbon organisation?—Yes.

1944. In former days they looked to the Ribbon organisation instead of to professional advice?—They did; there was no use in taking professional advice; the professional man could do nothing whatever for them.

1945. Why was that?—The professional man could do nothing for them once the tenancy was determined.

1946. Once the tenancy was determined by notice to quit, there was no defence to the ejectment?—None whatever.

1947. Now he has a claim to compensation?—There is a claim to compensation now, and the two cases are heard together, or rather the claim for compensation is an admission upon the part of the tenant to the right of the landlord to eject, and the two cases are usually heard at the same time.

1948. You mean that the claim of the landlord against the tenant, and the counter claim of the tenant against the landlord, are heard by the same chairman and disposed of at the same time?—They are.

1949. Have you ever considered whether the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act would be any remedy for the evils that existed?—If the police force or the resident magistrates are quite satisfied that they know the leaders of this organisation, of course it would be a very powerful weapon in their hands.

1950. Are you of opinion that it would bring about permanent good results?—A good deal depends upon the length of time during which the suspension should take place.

1951. Supposing the Habeas Corpus Act was suspended for two years, do you think that good effects would take place?—As I said before I think it would be a very powerful weapon, and assuming that these characters are known, so that there can be no mistake about them, it might do some good.

1952. Do you think, on the other hand, if a mistake were made, and men were apprehended upon suspicion, and were remanded, that would have a bad effect?—It would have a very bad effect. There might perhaps be some machinery devised by which parties arrested could obtain a hearing before some impartial tribunal; I do not know whether that is possible or not.

1953. Do you think that it would be advisable if it could be adopted?—Yes.

1954. That is, that after the police had selected some well known man who was supposed to be a Ribbonman, when the powers of the Habeas Corpus Act were suspended, he should have the opportunity of having his case heard, to show, if he could, that he was arrested upon insufficient evidence?—Yes; I do not say that that is practicable, but if practicable it would be a very good thing; I think that if the Habeas Corpus Act was suspended, it should be known to the public that no warrant would be issued by the Lord Lieutenant until the law officers of the Crown had certified that they were satisfied upon the evidence that the person was a proper person to be arrested.

1955. What kind of evidence do you refer to?—I could not say that; I only suggested that it should be known to the public that the Lord Lieutenant's warrant should not be issued until there had been a certificate from the law officers of the Crown that the person arrested was a proper subject for the application of the warrant.

1956. Would you consider it right to apply this remedy; the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act in the present state of the county, without attempting some other plan, such as you have suggested first?—I could not say that the remodelling of the police force, if it ever be remodelled (it has been suggested several times, and the more it has been suggested the more military the force has become, and it is becoming more military every day), the remodelling of the police force, I say, would be a work of time, even supposing that the authorities are disposed to remodel it at all.

1957. Do you not think that a present remedy could be brought to bear by the re-organisation of the police force?—I am not prepared to say that.

1958. You say that you have known Westmeath for 20 years?—Yes.

1959. During all that time has Ribbonism prevailed there?—I should think it has, decidedly. Ribbon outrages, even during my own recollection, were a great deal more numerous formerly than they have been latterly. They were formerly a great deal more numerous, but I also think that it was formerly a great deal more easy to get evidence.

1960. To what do you attribute the increased difficulty of getting evidence?—I think that it must be owing to an idea of the increased power of the Ribbon organisation to carry into effect their decrees against persons who give evidence.

1961. Was there always within your memory a difficulty in obtaining evidence?—Not always so much as at present.

1962. That difficulty has increased much of late years?—Yes.

1963. And you attribute that increase to the fear inspired by this organisation?—Yes, I do.

1964. Take Westmeath as a whole, compared to what it was 20 years ago, is the present condition of the county better or worse than it was then?—It has been worse within the last couple of years as I mentioned, because now the landlords having, to a certain extent, succumbed to the Ribbon influence, parties are endeavouring to get themselves replaced

replaced in the possession of land which they had either voluntarily parted, or been evicted from, 10, 15, 20, or 30 years ago. I know a case in which a person was in possession of land for 70 years, and he got notice on pain of death to give it up.

1965. Have you had any opportunity of knowing what has been the working of the Peace Preservation Act?—I have.

1966. I suppose you have had some experience in your capacity as clerk of the Crown, sitting in court, and from the documents coming through your hands, of knowing the working of the section, giving compensation to the representatives of the victims in cases of murder?—I have.

1967. Has the section operated well or ill in your opinion?—Only two cases have come before the grand jury; one was for the murder of the process server, Waters, and the other was for the murder of Messrs. Perry's steward, Dowling. I consider that the principle of the act is good, but that the sums granted as compensation, having regard to the position in life of the parties, were enormously large.

1968. How much was awarded in Dowling's case?—£. 800.

1969. To his widow?—Yes, to his widow, and the payment of it was to be placed upon the barony of Moycashel, and if it had been Mr. Perry instead of his steward that was murdered, and the grand jury had meted out compensation in that case upon the same scale, the amount would, beyond doubt, have entirely broken every small tenant in the barony of Moycashel.

1970. You mean if the same proportion had been observed in meting out the sums?—Yes.

1971. How much was awarded in Waters's case?—£. 325.

1972. To his mother?—Yes, to his mother.

1973. Upon what district of the county was that placed?—Upon the parish of Mullingar.

1974. Does that include the town of Mullingar?—It does.

1975. How much will the town of Mullingar have to pay?—I could not say, not knowing the valuation.

1976. Are you of opinion that that will have a good effect?—It would be very difficult to say; I think that if the awards were moderate, the principle would not be objected to, but I think that it is an immense hardship upon the people to have to pay such large sums.

1977. Do you think that the imposition of that sum of money upon the parish of Mullingar would have a deterrent effect?—I think it is extremely probable that if the persons, who either committed the murder or instigated it, were aware that the district would have to pay so large a sum for the murder of the process server, it might possibly not have taken place.

1978. Do you think that it will have a good effect in future?—It may, but I think that those people who are well disposed are suffering so enormously from the taxation that, unless there be either a stop put to the outrages or to the taxation, they will be utterly ruined. I think that, in principle, it is reasonable that the representatives of a person who is murdered, in consequence of an agrarian conspiracy, should be reasonably compensated, and in the same way, I think, it is just that a man who has been maimed or injured should receive reasonable compensation. I think also that paying these compensations off the districts involved has a deterrent effect in this way, that levying compensation for malicious injury to property is calculated also to have a deterrent effect of preventing outrages of that character; but I think that there certainly ought to be a limitation of amount imposed by Statute.

1979. Will you give the Committee your views upon the operation of the extra police tax?—I consider that the taxation for additional police is most iniquitous, and that it is not only useless, but calculated to create such a feeling of irritation in the minds of the loyal and well disposed as to be most injurious.

1980. How would you redress that?—I would not have it levied off the district at all.

1981. Where would you put it; would you make the Consolidated Fund pay it?—I would make the same fund pay it that pays for the existing police. I may as well give some instances relating to that point to the Committee. In the case of the murder of Dowling, as I have mentioned already, the grand jury presented 800*l.* to his widow. The taxation for the additional police in that particular instance is placed upon a very limited area. Messrs. Perry, the employers of Dowling, and Mr. Cantrell, both highly respectable people (the Messrs. Perry are very well able to afford it, the other gentleman perhaps is not so well able), between them pay more than one-half of the amount of the tax for the support of these extra policemen. In Mr. Cantrell's case it will simply ruin him if it continues.

1982. Were not these extra police sent there, among other purposes, for the protection of the Messrs. Perry?—Yes, and in that way I think it reasonable that Messrs. Perry should pay something for them; but in the other case which I spoke of, Mr. Cantrell's case, it certainly does not apply. I am only giving one case among numerous ones. It is certainly a very glaring instance of hardship.

1983. It has been suggested, I think, by some of our witnesses, that the area of taxation is not exactly what it ought to be; that houses ought to be taxed, or that the people ought to be taxed instead of the land. Have you anything to say to the Committee upon that point?—I have already stated that I object to such taxation in any shape or form, but if there is to be such, I think a small house tax preferable to the present system.

1984. But do you consider that a house tax, leaving out of the question altogether the amount to be levied, is better than a tax upon land?—Yes, but the amount must be considered, as it is a very small sum that could be levied off houses.

1985. Do you think the house tax, or the poll tax, the preferable tax; in your judgment which is the better of the two, and the more proper one to be enforced?—I do not know whether the poll tax could be collected; I do not think that it could be collected.

1986. What advantage would be derived from levying a tax upon houses which is not now derivable from that land?—Because there is scarcely any tax upon houses, the valuation is so small.

1987. The tax at present is upon the land?—The tax at present is upon the land.

1988. And of course that embraces the houses situated upon the land?—It does; but the Committee will understand this, that if the valuation

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of a house is only 1 *l.* a year, the amount payable by that person for 12 months additional taxation for the police would be very minute.

1989. Is it not the case that very many of the large farmers live in very bad houses?—Yes; but it is also true that the large farmers are not Ribbonmen.

1990. Are you of opinion that the small farmers who live in small houses are much more likely to be engaged in the conspiracy?—I do not think that the small farmers are Ribbonmen at all.

1991. Who do you think are the Ribbonmen then?—I think that the society is recruited from the labouring class.

1992. I understand you to say that you are opposed altogether to any local taxation for the purposes of the police?—My opinion is against it. I think that the well disposed suffer too severely by it.

1993. And that if it is to be raised at all by local taxation, are you in favour of a poll tax or a house tax?—Yes, one or the other, but I do not think a poll tax could be collected, and if it is to be a house tax the amount must be very moderate.

1994. Colonel *Wilson Patten.*] Why could it not be collected?—Because, unless you were prepared to grant warrants against the persons of the whole community, the labouring classes have got no goods upon which a warrant could be levied.

1995. The *Solicitor General for Ireland.*] The result would be that they would escape with impunity, unless you put them in prison?—Yes, unless you put them in prison.

1996. Do you think that if the landlords were to take a bold step and not to have these people in their employment that you referred to, and sought the aid of their tenants, and had the aid of an efficient police force, that would put an end to the conspiracy?—I must not be understood as saying that the landlords patronise the Ribbon Society.

1997. You suggested something of the kind, I thought?—I never suggested it.

1998. Did you not say that the landlords have in their employment men who were known to be Ribbonmen throughout the country?—Who were supposed to be Ribbonmen.

1999. For some short time, two or three years ago, Fenianism was more prevalent in Westmeath than it has been of late?—Yes; I do not think that there was a great deal of Fenianism in Westmeath.

2000. Was there more in Westmeath apparently than there is now?—There was more Fenianism.

2001. Had that Fenianism any effect upon the Ribbon conspiracy?—A political conspiracy in which the minds of the people were engaged must have that effect; the two could not go on together.

2002. Do you think that the effect of the Fenian conspiracy for a time was to diminish the outward effects, at all events, of Ribbonism?—I do.

2003. Of course you have had a considerable experience of juries in Westmeath?—I have.

2004. At all the assizes, for some years past, you have attended as Clerk of the Crown?—I have.

2005. And it is your duty to empannel the jury that tries the prisoners?—It is.

2006. And to receive their verdicts?—Yes.

2007. Of course you attend to the challenges that are made upon behalf of the prisoners?—I do.

2008. And the "stand by" on behalf of the Crown?—Yes.

2009. Has there been of late years any failure of justice in Westmeath consequent upon jurors not discharging their duty?—Upon that subject I could not speak; I am frequently out of court during the investigation, and while I am in court I am frequently not actually attending to the proceedings; it is no part of my duty to do so; I think the Crown solicitor, who is in attendance, is a much more competent authority upon that subject than I am.

2010. You call the jury upon the panel, and swear them, and take their verdict, but it is no part of your duty to attend to the evidence, or to record it?—Certainly not.

2011. You are present when the jury are empannelled?—Yes, but I do not always remain in court during the trials.

2012. You are present when the challenges take place of the jury?—Either myself, or some one to represent me.

2013. Colonel *Wilson Patten.*] When the jurors are challenged, are they often challenged by the prisoner?—Yes, in every case of felony the prisoner is entitled to challenge 20 jurors peremptorily, and that power is more or less exercised in cases of an agrarian character, but in Whiteboy cases the prisoner has no right of challenge.

2014. The power of the Crown to challenge is unlimited?—It is.

2015. Is that power exercised to any great extent?—It is occasionally; at the last assizes it was exercised to a considerable extent.

2016. Is it the custom of the Crown to challenge?—Occasionally; it was exercised to a considerable extent at the last assizes, as I have said.

2017. Do they tell the jury to stand by?—Yes, the Crown solicitor tells the juror to stand by.

2018. Mr. *Disraeli.*] I think I understand you that in your opinion these outrages have increased in the county of Westmeath during the last two years?—Yes.

2019. Have you, in consequence of that, communicated with the authorities of the county, and had conversations with them?—Except as conversations, I have not.

2020. But you have had conversations with them?—Yes, I have spoken with the resident magistrates and others about these outrages.

2021. Have you had any communication with the Lord Lieutenant of the county?—None whatever.

2022. When you have been in Dublin have you had communication with the central authorities there?—None.

2023. Have you never made any representations with respect to the state of the county?—None. I may mention that it is no portion whatever of my duty, beyond what it would be of any private gentleman in the county who did not hold a commission of the peace, to make any representation of that character.

2024. Mr. *Hardy.*] With reference to the subject of employing Ribbonmen, is it not next to impossible for any person who employs labour not to employ them?—I really think that it is to some extent impossible.

2025. That

2025. That is to say, any man wh[redacted]ng of cases of a much less serious any number of persons will have am[redacted]cases that would be dealt with sum- men who are generally suspected o[redacted]e petty sessions. Ribbonmen?—Yes, that is so.

2026. And with respect to farmers, you say [redacted]have before me an account of the that they have begun now to apply to attorneys [redacted]have happened in Westmeath during for advice, but that in former times when they [redacted]two years, and I cannot find any ad- thought that they had received any injustice [redacted]tion of justice whatever, for I find no they applied to the Ribbonmen?—No, I did not committals?—The cases I speak of are cases say that. What I said was this, that at the pre- somewhat of this character. If there happen to sent time they apply to a solicitor for advice to be assault cases occurring at fairs or markets, or procure payment of their compensation, and that cases of that kind, those are dealt with in a formerly they did not. The rest is purely matter summary way by the magistrates at petty of inference. sessions, by way of fine or imprisonment.

2027. As a matter of fact, when any of those acts which they considered injustice were perpetrated, whether they were Ribbonmen or not, the organisation in the county took up the case for them; was that so?—No, I do not say that.

2028. Then what do these agrarian outrages arise from?—I think some of the outrages which occurred were perpetrated, not through the organisation of the Ribbon Society at all.

2029. You have given the Committee some instances in which you say that there have been attempts to take possession of the land which has been long in the occupation of the present tenants?—Yes.

2030. Do you suppose that those attempts are being made through that Ribbon organisation? They are frequently.

2031. And as we have heard there are farms unlet in Westmeath on account of the threats against any one taking them, do you imagine that that effect would be caused by the Ribbon organisation?—I do; I think that the non-taking of them to a considerable extent is owing to the fear of the Ribbon organisation. At the same time I do not think that in the county of Westmeath at the present time I could call to mind three farms unlet.

2032. You told the Committee that the people do not complain of the administration of justice in Westmeath?—No; I do not think they do.

2033. And you stated that the reason they did not complain was that you thought that the offenders did not receive sufficiently severe treatment from certain magistrates?—No, that was not what I meant to convey to the Committee.

2034. That was the impression which you conveyed to my mind?—That was somewhat erroneous then; what I intended to convey was this, that there was a popular idea that when Ribbonmen or persons who were known to have the Ribbon Society at their back, came to be dealt with in the local courts, they were occasionally more tenderly dealt with than persons who were supposed not to have that power behind them.

2035. And you gave that as the reason for their not finding fault with the administration of justice, as I understand?—I never intended to convey that idea.

2036. Do you mean to apply that to the local courts; do you refer to the resident magistrates or to the unpaid magistrates?—To the unpaid magistrates, of course.

2037. Solely?—Of course.

2038. But do not the resident magistrates take almost all those agrarian cases into their charge, and conduct the investigations and the inquiries?—No, they do not. I am not speaking at all of agrarian cases in the proper sense of the word;

2040. And you think that in those cases there is an impression that the Ribbonman has been more leniently dealt with than the non-Ribbonman?—Do not understand me to say that that is the practice of the magistrates. I merely wish to convey to the Committee that there is a feeling among the people that it often happens.

2041. That that is the popular opinion?—Yes.

2042. Referring to the question of the residence of the Crown solicitors, I find on looking at Thom's Directory, that the whole of the Crown solicitors for the Quarter Sessions reside in Dublin, is that so?—That is not so.

2043. They have offices there, perhaps?—I am very far from saying that the administration of justice would suffer, even supposing that that was the case.

2044. That was what I was going to ask you; are they resident in Dublin, or are they local solicitors?—The Crown solicitor for Westmeath is the Crown solicitor also for the King's County, Mr. Julian.

2045. I am not speaking of any particular case?—Mr. Julian is the Crown solicitor for Westmeath, and also for King's County, and he resides in King's County, having an office in Dublin. The sessional Crown solicitor for Westmeath resides in Westmeath.

2046. Then those are not their residences, but their offices, which are referred to in the Directory of Dublin?—No doubt, but in Thom's Directory they usually give both.

2047. I would ask you generally, whether you are satisfied with the present jury law, and with the challenges?—No.

2048. In what respect do you think it deficient?—I really did not expect to be examined upon that point. I have not given my attention to that subject; it is a very large subject.

2049. I understand you to say, that you are not satisfied with the existing state of the jury law?—I am not satisfied with the existing state of the jury law.

2050. Do you think that it is fair to the Crown as it stands?—I think it is quite as fair to the Crown as to the subject; the sheriff is almost irresponsible. If the sheriff chooses to return a jury that he thinks will suit the purposes of the Crown, he can do it; and if he chooses to return a jury that he thinks will suit the purposes of the prisoner, he can do it.

2051. Your objection is to the absolute power of the sheriff?—Yes, but it is a very wide subject; if I had a little time for consideration I could go into it.

2052. Now, with respect to the police, you have no special knowledge of the management of the police in Ireland?—No special knowledge,

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in so far as I am not connected [redacted] stabulary.

2053. The Solicitor General for I[redacted] you with reference to detectives, a[redacted] that you did not know what had been [redacted] county of Westmeath?—I do not.

2054. You do not know whether [redacted]ce have, as a matter of constant practice, employed intermediaries to obtain information for them; to obtain interviews with persons suspected of knowing about the intended commission of crime?—I do not know what they have done.

2055. But if they have done so, they have adopted your plan?—Except that they have not caught the criminals.

2056. If they have adopted your plan it has not succeeded?—It has not succeeded.

2057. With respect to the local detective force which you suggest, you want certain persons, known to the local population, to mix among the population, either as policemen or as connected with persons who can give information?—Yes.

2058. And you think that with that and with what you call a fearless magistracy, these things might be put down?—In course of time.

2059. I want you to explain the term, "a fearless magistracy;" do you complain of any want of courage in the resident magistrates?—No. I really think the term explains itself, and that is that when a prisoner was brought before the magistrate he would deal with him as he thought he ought to to be dealt with, without fear or favour.

2060. Could you give the Committee any instance of their having done the reverse?—I could not from my own knowledge. As I have mentioned already, I have not been in the petty sessions once in two years.

2061. You speak entirely from rumour?—Entirely.

2062. You have not even heard of any special case that you could mention to the Committee?—I have from time to time heard of cases, but I could not recall them by name or date at this moment.

2063. I am afraid that in the highest courts we sometimes hear of sentences which seem to lead to the impression that the judge has not taken a correct view of the subject?—No doubt.

2064. Mr. *Bruen.*] Is the petty jury panel for Westmeath a very large one?—A very large one. At the last assizes I think that there were about 170 names upon it.

2065. I think you stated that the right of challenge by the prisoner was always exercised by him in those agrarian cases?—Where the charge is one of felony it is; but in the great bulk of those agrarian cases the prisoner has no right of challenge whatever, except for cause.

2066. In those cases where the right of challenge is exercised, and the cases are Ribbon cases, have you watched the way in which the prisoner's right of challenge has been exercised?—Yes.

2067. Against whom principally has the right of challenge been exercised?—First they challenge all the magistrates.

2068. Sir *G. Grey.*] Are magistrates often on petty juries?—Yes, and grand jurors are also upon the common jury panel. The county of Westmeath differs from other counties in that respect; in other counties men of that class would be insulted by being put upon the common jury panel, [redacted]know perfectly well that it is necessary [redacted]dministration of justice that they should [redacted]n the panel in the county of Westmeath, [redacted]herefore they do not complain of it.

2069. Mr. *Bruen.*] They are quite willing to exercise whatever duty is put upon them, even though they should incur personal risk by doing so?—I think so.

2070. Do you suppose that the peremptory challenge of 20 names would be exhausted when all the magistrates and grand jurors upon the panel had been challenged?—Sometimes not, I think.

2071. After that what class of persons does the prisoner challenge?—As a rule, those persons whom they believe to be of the most independent and firm judgment.

2072. But in what class of life would they be?—I am not prepared to say that they are confined to any particular class of life.

2073. The Crown exercises the right of challenge, does it not?—The Crown has an unlimited right of challenge in every case.

2074. And exercises it?—Sometimes, but to a very limited extent.

2075. The *Solicitor General for Ireland.*] When the jury are being called, the Crown solicitor says, "Stand by," to a juror?—Yes.

2076. But when the whole panel is exhausted and the jury is not made up, those men must go upon the jury unless the Crown can challenge them for cause?—Yes, that is so.

2077. Mr. *Bruen.*] Have you had any instructions to exercise the right of calling upon jurors to stand by?—No; that is not my business, that is the business of the Crown solicitor.

2078. Within your memory in the county of Westmeath, have there been many large evictions; going back for the last 22 or 23 years?—Yes, there have been.

2079. Evictions of a wholesale character?—Very few; I can only call to mind one instance at the present moment of what I call a clearance, that is, the absolute removal of an entire tenantry from a particular locality.

2080. You state that you remember one?—Yes, I do.

2081. Sir *G. Grey.*] About when was that?—Perhaps about 10 or 12 years ago, I think.

2082. Mr. *Bruen.*] Could you remember the number of tenants who were removed in that case?—I could not remember the number.

2083. Mr. *Plunket.*] Could you go near it?—I could not; I do not know the number.

2084. Mr. *Bruen.*] Could you give the Committee any idea of the extent of land that was cleared?—I may be entirely mistaken about it, but perhaps there might have been 200 acres.

2085. Perhaps you could give the Committee the circumstances?—The only actual clearance that I know of was that of [redacted]; it does not, perhaps, reflect so much upon Mr. [redacted] at all; he purchased the property in the Landed Estates Court, and he incorporated a great part of it, or the entire of it, with his own domain, and for the purposes of that incorporation he removed all the tenants.

2086. He evicted them?—Yes.

2087. Did he actually turn them out upon the road?—He compelled them to give up possession.

2088. Did he not actually put them into other farms?—I do not know to what extent those parties

parties absolutely left Mr. 's property, but he stated to me yesterday that a great number of them now held land from him upon other portions of the estate; I do not know from my own knowledge whether that is correct or not, but I presume he would not state it unless it was true.

2089. That is the only case of wholesale eviction that you can remember within the last 20 years?—That is the only one. At the time of the Famine, in the year 1848, and for some two or three years afterwards, the state of the people caused wholesale evictions; but that was eviction for non-payment of rent; but it had the same result, it swept the people off the land in thousands; but in the sense of clearing them by evicting them on notice to quit, that has not been, in my opinion, extensively practised in the county of Westmeath.

2090. Do you know of any instances of raising the rent to any great extent?—Yes, rents have been very considerably raised.

2091. Have they been raised within the last 22 or 23 years?—Yes, very much indeed.

2092. Sir *G. Grey.*] Are rents well paid?—They are very well paid; there is no part of Ireland where they are better paid.

2093. Mr. *Bruen.*] Do you know whether [redacted]at is called the "hanging gale" is the usual [redacted]stom in Westmeath?—It is usual, but not [redacted]variably the case.

2094. Under that custom the tenant has always the enjoyment of half a year's rent in his pocket as a sort of capital for the time?—Yes, he usually has.

2095. You spoke of claims to the possession of land on the part of occupiers which gave rise to these Ribbon outrages; do those claims go back a great number of years?—A great number.

2096. If I remember rightly, you stated in one case that the claim extended back about 70 years?—It did in one case.

2097. Can you say whether those claims are founded upon the party being descendant of the former holder of the estates?—No, not all; no such idea ever entered anyone's head.

2098. Mr. *Downing.*] You stated that rents had been very much raised in the county of Westmeath during the last 20 years?—Yes; not over the entire county, but over parts.

2099. Have they not been raised within a very recent period in many instances?—They have; that is to say, within some half dozen years.

2100. You have alluded in the early part of your evidence to the murder of Mr. Fetherston?—Yes.

2101. Had Mr. Fetherston, previously to his being murdered, twice raised the rents upon his property?—I believe he had; he was about raising them at the time he was murdered.

2102. Was not that the third rise in rent that he had been attempting at the time he was shot?—What I heard was that it was the second.

2103. Do you know the Rev. Mr. Crofton, who was examined here yesterday?—I saw him here yesterday; I know who he is.

2104. Have you heard that he has raised his rents?—No, I believe he attempted to raise them.

2105. Do you know what rise he attempted to put upon the tenants over the valuation?—I have heard that it was a uniform rent he wanted to arrive it. I have heard that he wished to raise his rents one-third over Griffith's valuation. The effect [redacted]—that in some cases, inasmuch as some of the rents were already considerably over Griffith's valuation, was to raise the rents a very s[redacted] sum per year.

2106. [redacted] stated to the Committee that you conside[redacted]he principal cause of the format[redacted]s society in Westmeath was to prevent the raising of rents and evictions?—Yes, I think that used to be the principal object.

2107. You also stated that in your opinion the state of things now was somewhat worse than in former years with regard to obtaining evidence and instituting prosecutions?—That is my opinion.

2108. Are you aware that there was a Committee of this House, which sat in 1852, on the subject of agrarian crime and Ribbonism in the counties of Armagh and Monaghan?—I was not aware of it.

2109. Do you know Captain Warburton, who was 28 years a resident magistrate?—If you refer to Mr. Warburton, who was stationed in Kilbeggan, I know him. He went from there to some place in Tipperary.

2110. Do you think that this would apply to the state of Westmeath at present; I find that Mr. Warburton stated, "I found it in a most disorganised state, certainly, and a system of intimidation carried on that I had never seen before; a most decided system of intimidation, with an almost impossibility of getting any evidence to enable me to bring home a conviction or to institute a prosecution against the secret societies"?—That applies exactly to the state of things now.

2111. Does this apply: he was asked, "What did you mean by the expression 'a better system?'" and the answer is, "Better organised for their own plans than they were formerly in other places where I have been." Do you think their plans are better organised than they were formerly?—I do.

2112. He is asked, "Is it to that you ascribe the difficulty of procuring evidence?—It is to that system, the great reign of terror that they had established. Every person was afraid to be seen speaking to a policeman, or any person in authority, for fear it should go abroad that he was giving evidence or telling some story." Does that exactly apply to the state of Westmeath?—No, it does not.

2113. Why does it not?—Because a person is not afraid to be seen speaking to a policeman or a person in authority unless he is a Ribbonman.

2114. That is what I refer to?—Ribbonmen would certainly be afraid to be seen speaking to a policeman, because of course if he were seen it is most likely that parties would come to the conclusion that he was giving information, but parties who are not connected with the society can speak to a policeman without any such suspicion whatever.

2115. I will read this: "Did you observe from any investigations you held that it obstructed the course of justice, so far as you had to do with it?—I am quite satisfied that it did. They were so watched that they were afraid to speak the truth, and the most awful perjury committed that I ever witnessed I think was at those investigations; for instance, a husband and the wife, brother and brother, swearing directly opposite to the same fact before the magistrates

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at petty sessions, and before the magistrates at private inquiries, as to the state of the country as to crime in general"?—I think it is not so bad in Westmeath as that, but I think that the reign of terror which prevails has the effect of preventing parties from giving truthful evidence in courts of justice.

2116. He is asked, "Do you [redacted] difficult now to get private information than formerly?—Decidedly, so as to be able to make use of it; I have got a great deal of private information, but I cannot make any use of it;" that is exactly the same state of things as exists now, is it not?—Very much so.

2117. Then he is asked, "Does it interfere with other matters besides matters connected with the occupation of land?—Yes. I will state a case; a man went out to collect his debts, who was a baker in Newry, and he was served with most desperate notices because he asked for the debts; he was told if he sent his bread cart again he would have other news to bring back with him;" are things as bad now as they were then?—Not at all; we are not so bad as that in Westmeath.

2118. But you yourself received a notice, as you have told the Committee?—Yes.

2119. But you do not believe that they intended to carry out what they threatened in that letter?—I do not know whether they did or not; I have told the Committee that my opinion was that their object was to intimidate the proprietor, but if the ejectment had been carried out, and I had been to the fore, as they say in the country, I would not guarantee that I would not be shot.

2120. Do you not believe that it would rather mean that they thought that by your means the landlord would give what they asked?—Yes, I am quite sure they would not have shot me, except as a matter of necessity.

2121. Now, with regard to the sympathy of the classes in Westmeath beyond the labouring classes; you say that they sympathised to a great extent with the parties who committed agrarian crime?—I have stated that formerly they did, when the operations of the Ribbon Society were confined to controlling the acts of the landlord.

2122. In your opinion, if the Land Bill to which you have referred had been in operation two or three years instead of only one year, would that have had a powerful influence upon the entire community and population of Westmeath, as well as other counties?—I have no doubt that it will have a very beneficial effect, but at the same time it will not meet the cases I have referred to, of one tenant, or rather the predecessor of a tenant, trying to compel his successor to give up land.

2123. But is not that an exceptional case?—It is.

2124. Now, let me ask whether, in your opinion, the labouring population in Westmeath is not in a very wretched condition?—In my opinion it is not.

2125. Are you able to tell the Committee what are the wages, without food, which a labouring man in good health and able to work would obtain?—I think a permanent labourer all the year round, provided with a house, can now get from from 6*s.* to 7*s.* a week; perhaps 7*s.*

2126. That is with a house?—It is with a house.

2127. Is he charged anything for that house?—Generally speaking he is not. I think the occasional labourer, from about the 1st of February to about the 1st of December, cannot have less than 9*s.* a week.

2128. Sir *G. Grey.*] Would there be any land attached to the house?—No land attached to the house.

2129. Mr. *Downing.*] To what part of Ireland are you alluding?—To the entire county of Westmeath.

2130. Is it so in Mullingar?—Yes; the wages in or about Mullingar ought to be less than about the remoter part of the county, as there is a greater command of labour there.

2131. With regard to the houses of the labouring population, are they very wretched?—They are very bad.

2132. In your opinion, if they were made more comfortable, do not you think it would have a very salutary influence with regard to crime?—I do; I think that anything that raises the self-respect of a man tends to improve the tone of society, and I am quite sure that better house accommodation would increase the labourer's self respect.

2133. And make him a better subject, a better member of society, and more amenable to the law?—Most decidedly; at the same time I do not think the actual state of the labouring population has much to do with the recent acts of the Ribbon Society.

2134. How do you reconcile that last answer with the fact that you have already stated that the Ribbon Society consisted, in your opinion, of the labouring population?—The acts of the society have not been at all directed to procuring increased accommodation, or better wages for the labouring class; at the same time I have no doubt that if the position of the labouring class were bettered by their having better habitations, it would have the effect of making them better members of society.

2135. They would not be so open to receive a bribe, or those inducements which are now successful with them?—They would not.

2136. From your knowledge has there been recently, within a few years, an improvement to any extent in the dwellings of the labouring population?—There has.

2137. To what extent do you think?—It has not been very considerable; but some few proprietors have built very nice houses for their labourers and their families.

2138. And that, of course, has ameliorated their condition?—No doubt it has improved the labourers very much, and where there is a resident proprietor I find, in my experience, that if he has been firm and just in his dealings with his tenants, his neighbourhood is always very much better than one where the proprietor is a non-resident.

2139. You alluded to a proprietor to whom you are solicitor; he resides in London, does he not?—Yes.

2140. He is therefore an absentee?—He is.

2141. Then I understood you to say that you would approve of a house tax instead of an assessment upon the land generally?—Yes, but the amount to be levied should be very much reduced indeed, and this answer must be taken subject to what I have already said, namely, that I object to such taxation in toto.

2142. Have you considered how that could be worked?

worked?—Of course the amount of taxation that is at present levied could not be by any possibility levied by a house tax, it could only be taxation of a very limited amount.

2143. I understand you to disapprove altogether of those very exorbitant sums, as you consider them, being awarded, for example, in the case of Waters, 325 *l.*?—£. 325 in that case, and in the case of Dowling 800 *l.*

2144. Waters was a bailiff, was he not?—He was a process server.

2145. What would have been his salary?—His salary was 10 *l.* a year.

2146. He was not married, I believe?—He was not.

2147. And his mother was, I suppose, rather an old person?—Yes; he was a man of about 30 years of age.

2148. And she was, probably, 60?—Yes.

2149. And she was awarded compensation to the amount of 325 *l.*?—Yes; I think, in a pecuniary point of view, the woman had scarcely any interest in his life.

2150. Did he live with her?—He did; but he certainly was able to consume everything that he earned.

2151. You also stated that you thought it was only fair that Messrs. Perry, who had the protection of the police, should pay a portion of the necessary tax for sending the police there?—I said I thought that it was not at all so extreme a case as that of Mr. Cantrell, because the Messrs. Perry had the protection of the police.

2152. Do you really think that a man, because he receives the protection of the authorities of the country, because his life is in danger, ought to be called upon to pay anything whatsoever for that protection?—I know that the public occasionally would be very glad to have that protection.

2153. That is not the question?—As you put it in the abstract, I think he ought not.

2154. Are you not aware that crime is generally committed by persons who are not resident in the neighbourhood of the place where the crime is committed?—Generally that is so.

2155. And very probably the party who is watched, and eventually loses his life by an assassin, loses his life not in his own house, and not in the locality where, perhaps, he committed some offence against the feelings or against the system of the society?—That is frequently the case.

2156. He may have been murdered eight or ten miles away?—It sometimes happens so.

2157. In that case, is it not a greater hardship that the people in the district should be taxed?—Yes; I think the Act of last Session requires some amendment to give the Grand Jury more discretion than they have at present, as regards the chargeability of these sums.

2158. But they have very large power under the Act, have they not?—No; the tax must be leuied where the murder occurs; the words are: "The barony, half-barony, or other district."

2159. The *Solicitor General for Ireland.*] No; the words are, "the county at large," or the barony, half-barony, &c., and so on?—I know that the words "or other district," very much puzzled the grand jury to tell what they meant. I would allow the grand jury to charge it upon such portion of the county, even including townlands, as they might in their discretion, after hearing the evidence, think fit.

2160. Mr. *Downing.*] Is it not a source of very great annoyance and complaint that grand juries generally do assess either for malicious injuries or agrarian crime upon too limited an area?—No, I do not think it is; the claims for malicious injuries come first before the presentment sessions, and the grand jury almost invariably adopt the area which has been adopted at the presentment sessions; but in the case of this presentment which we are now speaking of, that does not come before the presentment sessions at all, but is made by the grand jury.

2161. What would you recommend with regard to that section of the Act of Parliament?—That the grand jury should have entire discretion with regard to the chargeability; for instance, that they might charge it, if they chose, upon a townland or barony or district other than that where the murder was committed.

2162. I need scarcely ask you whether among the grand jury there is no one representing the ratepayers?—Excepting in so far as they are ratepayers themselves for their demesnes.

2163. Would you not prefer to give the judge of assize the power of awarding compensation in the case of agrarian crime; do you not think that that would be more satisfactory to the people at large?—I think the amount should be ascertained, not by the grand jury, but by the judge, assisted by a special jury.

2164. Sir *G. Grey.*] Is not there an appeal to the judge of assize from the grand jury?—There is.

2165. Mr. *Russell Gurney.*] You spoke of that case in 1869, when you received a threatening letter; what course did you pursue?—Before I had received the letter, I had been directed by the proprietor not to take any legal proceedings against the tenants.

2166. Had you written that letter by his directions?—I had written the letter of application by his directions, but before I received the threatening letter, I had been directed by him not to follow up my own letter.

2167. Were any further proceedings taken?—There were not.

2168. Do you know whether the agent had previously received a threatening letter?—I think that the agent did receive one; I am not quite sure whether he received a letter in regard to that particular transaction or not, but I think that he did receive some threatening letter.

2169. Are you aware that the agent communicated that to the proprietor?—I cannot say.

2170. And you received instructions not to proceed in the matter?—I received those directions before I got the letter.

2171. But after the agent had received one?—No; my instructions to proceed for the recovery of the rent had been countermanded before any threatening letter had been received by anyone.

2172. Before the agent had received one?—Yes.

2173. How long before you received the letter did you receive the countermand?—I received the countermand shortly after I had received instructions for the application.

2174. You spoke of your belief that the Ribbonmen were more favoured than others; have you any reason to suppose that that opinion is well founded?—I have no reason to suppose so, except that the popular opinion is to that effect.

2175. You spoke of tenants being able to make

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claims for compensation; have there been many claims made for it?—There have not been any evictions; there have been no disturbances of tenants by the landlords.

2176. Have there been any claims?—Yes, there are claims now pending.

2177. How many are there pending?—I can speak of my own knowledge of four, in which I am myself engaged.

2178. Claims by those who have received notice to quit?—Yes; they are to come off at the next quarter sessions.

2179. On which side are you engaged?—I am engaged on both sides; in two cases for the proprietor, and in two cases for the tenant; there has been no decision in Westmeath up to the present time.

2180. With regard to the juries; you spoke of there having been a large panel in Westmeath, is there generally a large panel in Westmeath?—Yes.

2181. The Committee have been told that it is a very small panel?—Whoever gave that evidence must have been mistaken.

2182. You say that the Crown exercise their right of making jurors stand aside; to what extent do they do that ordinarily?—Ordinarily they do not do it at all.

2183. Not in agrarian cases?—No, it was exercised at the last assizes more extensively than I ever knew it to be before.

2184. Usually, you say, it is not exercised; has it been done in Crown cases at all?—Occasionally, perhaps in the case of one or two jurors.

2185. How many were made to stand aside at the last assizes?—I could not give that; there were I dare say half a dozen, that is to say in one case.

2186. And were the whole rights to challenge exhausted on either side?—No, they were not; the prisoner at the last assizes I do not think exhausted more than about 15 or 16 of his challenges.

2187. And five or six were challenged upon the side of the Crown, and that you say was an unusual number?—That was an unusual number upon the part of the Crown.

2188. Mr. *Plunket.*] Do I understand you to say that a change has come over the character of this society since 1868; since the date of Mr. Fetherston's murder?—Yes, that is the objects of the society have been enlarged.

2189. Do you mean that up to that time the outrages were directed rather against landlords, who, as they thought, unjustly evicted tenants than in controlling the other relations of society?—Yes, against landlords who had either evicted tenants, or who had raised or threatened to raise their rents, or against tenants who had recently come into the occupation of land from which parties had been so evicted.

2190. Do you remember the murder of Mrs. Kelly in 1856?—I do.

2191. That was not supposed to be an agrarian murder?—I think it was decidedly.

2192. But was not her nephew twice tried for that murder?—He never was brought to trial; her nephew was arrested, and there were informations sworn, but my opinion is that it was an agrarian murder.

2193. I believe that there is a great difference of opinion about that?—I think there is very little now, but at the time there was; I think that it is perfectly well known now that it was an agrarian outrage.

2194. Do you form the opinion which you have expressed as regards the change in the character of the system from its fruits—from the outrages which have been committed?—Yes, it was formerly perfectly well known what the grievance was, either that the parties had got notice to quit the land, or that their rent was to be raised.

2195. The Committee have before them a record of homicides committed in Westmeath from 1848 up to the present time, and I find, on looking through it for those which are of an agrarian character at all, that from 1852 up to the present time there have been seven homicides which were supposed to be of an agrarian character: but that, with the exception of the murder of Mrs. Kelly, of which we have spoken, there is not any instance of the homicide of a landlord?—If you would have the goodness to repeat the names I could tell you my opinion of them.

2196. In the year 1864 there is the case of Peter Walsh, whose father had taken a house from which the previous tenant had been evicted?—That is the case I put, in which a man had come into the occupation of land from which the previous tenant had been recently evicted.

2197. But you could scarcely say that that was a punishment against a landlord?—Yes, decidedly; it was to prevent any person from taking the land. I consider it a punishment against a landlord if his land is left to lie waste.

2198. The principle of that punishment was that because the landlord had evicted some one, the successor was to be executed?—I think that the object of that was to prevent any person from taking the land.

2199. Was that an instance in which the act had the sympathy of the farming classes of the country?—Yes, of a large proportion of them, I think. They did not sympathise with the crime, but rather with the object which might be obtained by the commission of it.

2200. That is your opinion?—That is my opinion.

2201. Then the next instance is that of Patrick Connor, in 1863; and the account which we have of him is that he was a carpenter, and that he was waylaid, and beaten to death; he was supposed to have given information to the magistrates, and was therefore unpopular?—That was clearly, in my opinion, carrying out the edict of the Ribbon Society against a person whom they considered a traitor.

2202. Then there is the murder of Lawrence Kelly, in 1859, who was shot dead whilst standing at his door. He had advertised that he would dispose of a portion of his land in Con-acre. You would not say that that was in revenge for an eviction?—I would not, nor do I believe that he was shot for that reason.

2203. In 1858 there is the case of Edward Kelly, and in 1859 the case of Jessop. They were two farmers who were each shot dead; that would come under your definition, would it not?—Yes, both those parties were shot because they had taken a farm from which a person had been recently dispossessed.

2204. Is this a mistake; because the statement we have here is that Edward Kelly, a respectable farmer, was waylaid and shot dead. He had taken some land which another was anxious to get?—It was land that a person had been dispossessed from;

from; Jessop and Kelly were both murdered in relation to the same farm. Kelly took it first and Jessop succeeded him.

2205. In your opinion, the statement in the return we have here that it was because some one else was anxious to take the land is incorrect?—Yes, it is to an extent incorrect; there is no doubt about that.

2206. Then there is Thomas Kerry in 1853; he was beaten to death; that was stated to be the fruit of the Ribbon society; do you remember that case?—I do not remember what that case was.

2207. Do you recollect the case in the same year of Thomas Farrell, who was also a farmer?—Perhaps if you will mention the circumstances it might recall the case to my recollection.

2208. He was shot dead in his own house; that was an agrarian outrage?—I do not recollect that case.

2209. Then in 1852 there was the case of John Lyons, a labourer, a stranger to the district, who had obtained employment; he was beaten to death?—If that is a correct report, it clearly was not a case directed against the landlord.

2210. And do you believe that in those cases in which farmers were shot, because they ventured to take land from which others had been ejected, those crimes had the sympathy of the farmers throughout the county to any great extent?—I do; subject to the explanation I have already given under this head.

2211. Of the respectable farmers?—I have stated already that they considered those acts had the effect of preventing themselves from being dealt with in the same way by the landlords, and that therefore they had their sympathy.

2212. With reference to the Rev. Mr. Crofton, I believe that the raising of the rent which he proposed was not an unjust increase; will you give us your opinion upon that subject?—My opinion is that the increase was unjust; my opinion is that the land is too dear at present, without any rise whatever. Mr. Boyd mentioned to me yesterday that his land, which adjoins Mr. Crofton's, and was of a better quality, was set out at a much lower rent.

2213. Mr. Crofton's explanation of his conduct was, that he was willing to give the land to his tenants at the same price that he, as a tenant himself, paid for it in another county?—You cannot compare two farms; because, first, the land must be of the same quality, and, secondly, it must be in the same locality.

2214. Is it not the fact that the land in Westmeath is very good land?—It varies; there is some very good, and there is some very bad land there.

2215. Is it not generally very good as compared with the rest of Ireland?—It is.

2216. You say that when Fenianism came into Westmeath, it was impossible that Fenianism and Ribbonism should go on together; what do you mean by that?—I mean that the effect of the Fenian organisation was such as to suspend the operation of the other society; it has been alleged that one of the objects of Fenianism was the re-distribution of landed property; and clearly if parties were looking to the realisation of that object through the Fenian conspiracy, it would have the effect of suspending the operations of the Ribbon conspiracy in the same direction.

2217. Which should you say was the larger organisation, Fenianism or Ribbonism?—So far as I am capable of forming an opinion, I believe that the numbers of the Fenian Society in Westmeath, that is of actually sworn Fenians, was not large, and I am perfectly certain that the objects of the Fenian Society had not the sympathies of the people at all; that is of the people who have any land.

2218. Do you believe that there is any Ribbonman in Westmeath who is voluntarily a Ribbonman;—I do not refer to those who are forced into it against their will, but who is voluntarily a Ribbonman—who is at the same time a loyal subject?—I believe there is not. I believe that it is perfectly inconsistent that a man should be a sworn Ribbonman, and at the same time loyal to the throne.

2219. In that sense would you not say that it was rather a political society?—It is not a political society. I think in the case of a man joining any secret society of that character *ipso facto*, he must be a very bad subject of the Crown.

2220. You say also that it is not a religious society in any sense?—That is my opinion.

2221. Have you ever known any Protestant who was a member of the society?—No; I have not known any man, Protestant or Catholic, to be a member of it, but the victims of the society have been in an enormous proportion Catholics. I cannot say of any Ribbonman whether he is or is not a Catholic.

2222. Did you ever know a Protestant Ribbonman?—No, I never did, but I have frequently heard of Protestants who were supposed to stand very well with the Ribbonmen.

2223. Mr. *James.*] You stated in answer to a question, that you had had some conversations with magistrates and others with reference to the state of crime, and what you know about it, in the years 1868 and 1869; what would be the effect of the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act; do you think think that it would be satisfactorily received in Westmeath now?—I am unable to answer that question, whether it would be well received by the majority of the people in Westmeath or not.

2224. I am not speaking of the Ribbonmen, but I am speaking of the opinions of the majority of the well-educated and well-disposed classes in Westmeath?—I am unable to give an answer to that question.

2225. You know that the magistrates reported in favour of it in 1869?—I am aware of it.

2226. Do you know anything that has caused a change in the opinions of the magistrates since that time?—No; I think that an enormous majority of the magistrates are in favour of it.

2227. And what is the opinion of the people?—I am unable to form an opinion upon that subject. If the parties were sure that it would be confined to objectionable characters, then, as a matter of course, the well-disposed would not object to it; but I think the people are somewhat apprehensive as to the working of it.

2228. Did you observe the operation of the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act between 1866 and 1869?—I did.

2229. Did you hear of any case in which you had reason to think that an innocent and well-affected person had been detained under the provisions of that Act?—I only heard of one.

2230. Have you reason to think that that was a well-grounded complaint?—Yes, I have; but the man was only detained for a very short time.

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2231. For how long was he detained?—A couple of days, I think.

2232. That was the only case in which you heard of any complaint of the power of the Act being improperly used?—I do not know whether it was improperly used in that case or not.

2233. But you heard a complaint of it?—I knew the man; he happened to be a very humble neighbour of mine, and I do not think that he was obnoxious to the charge of Fenianism.

2234. The Committee have heard that hitherto the power of detention has been exercised upon information given by the constabulary alone; would you suggest that there should be any assistance received from the magistracy, if the Act were suspended?—I have already stated my opinion that no warrant should issue from the Lord Lieutenant to arrest any party, unless the law officers of the Crown had certified that they had fully considered the evidence, and that it was a fit case for the issue of a warrant.

2235. That is not my question; do you think that the local magistrates' power might be used to assist the constabulary?—Yes, certainly.

2236. With reference to juries; how low does the sheriff or summoning officer go in summoning the jury?—I could not say how low, but I should say in or about 50*l.*, except persons in the towns. The sheriff summons jurors who have holdings in towns, and who are persons of considersble respectability; but persons who reside in the county, and whose valuation would depend principally upon the land they held, I should say the minimum would be about 50 *l.* per annum.

2237. Do you mean 50*l.* per annum rental?—Yes.

2238. And above that 50 *l.* per annum of rental, would you find many Ribbonmen existing, according to your belief?—I do not believe that there is one at all above that.

2239. Then you would have your jury almost free from Ribbonmen?—I am perfectly convinced that there is not a Ribbonman upon the Westmeath panel.

2240. Mr. Serjeant *Sherlock.*] You spoke of the county of Meath and portions of the King's County; are you officially connected with either of those counties?—I am not.

2241. Then you know nothing of the condition of either of those two counties except from ordinary report?—That is so.

2242. You were asked by the Solicitor General for Ireland with regard to the letting of grass lands; are you aware at present whether there is any objection upon the part of the people to the habit of letting grass lands which takes place annually in the county of Meath?—No doubt there is a very great objection.

2243. Has it exhibited itself recently?—There has been a great deal of dissatisfaction expressed in reference to it.

2244. Lately?—Yes.

2245. Are you aware of that yourself?—Most unquestionably. The farmers have a very great objection to the land being periodically set up to the highest bidder, because it tends by the competition which it affords, and by the enormous prices which are realised by it, to give their own landlords an exaggerated idea of the value of land.

2246. But that has been the habit in the county of Meath for many years standing, as it not?—Yes; but it has increased latterly.

2247. You were asked about portions of the King's County adjoining westward; do you know of any Ribbon outrages within the last two years that were perpetrated within a space of more than half a mile from the borders of the county of Westmeath?—There were two cases, namely, those of Moran and Fox. I do not recollect exactly the locality in which those outrages were perpetrated; it was not very far from the county of Westmeath, I believe.

2248. With reference to the letter which you yourself received, the gentleman alluded to there, the landlord, resides in London?—He does.

2249. And is it still your opinion that it was intended to intimidate him by the threats used in that letter?—Yes.

2250. They intended to operate upon his fears here by threatening to shoot you over there?—Yes.

2251. Now, with regard to the imposing of additional police; do you know the village of Raharney?—Yes, very well.

2252. An outrage occurred there out of which a trial arose at the last assizes?—Yes.

2253. There was a barrack, and a large force of constabulary existing there at the time of the outrage, was there not?—Yes.

2254. The outrage took place within a few yards of the barrack, did it not?—Yes.

2255. The police force was quite sufficient for all practical purposes up to the time of the occurrence of the outrage?—I should think it was; there is another police barrack at Killucan, only a couple of miles away.

2256. I believe that the police force in that village where there had been a large existing police force was increased by six, was it not?—I am not aware of the numbers, but there has been an increase of the police force there.

2257. The returns mention six, and you have no reason to doubt that that is so?—No.

2258. With regard to the appointment of Crown Solicitors, or solicitors connected with the county, is residence, as a general rule, regarded as necessary?—I think not.

2259. Are you aware that when a vacancy took place some time ago in the county of Tipperary, the absence of residence was considered an objection, and that a resident gentleman was appointed on account of his residence there?—No, I think that the Sessional Crown Solicitor for Tipperary is a non-resident.

2260. You spoke of the selection of the jury, and of the jury panel, and with regard to the rights of the Crown to direct members of the jury who are called to stand aside. Have you ever known in your experience that those gentlemen thus directed to stand aside have been afterwards called by reason of the entire panel having been exhausted?—No, I never knew of a panel having been exhausted, or anything at all approaching to it.

2261. And when you spoke of the discretion of the sheriff, with regard to the selection of a jury, of course that discretion is limited to the names on the panel, is it not?—No; the sheriff selects the persons whom he wishes to place upon the panel from the jurors' book; but what I intended to convey was, that his discretion was practically unlimited as regarded the parties he put upon the panel or the place on the panel at which he placed their names; the panel is called in numerical order, and in that way the sheriff can select whatever jury he pleases; he can give

give the Crown or the prisoner whatever jury he likes.

2262. And you think that some alteration of the law would be advisable in that respect?—I do.

2263. Do you know of any general feeling of hostility in the county of Westmeath between the class of farmers and the class of labourers?—I do not. The labouring men used formerly to regard the farmers with much greater hostility than the landlords, because the farmers, when there was an abundance of labour, invariably screwed them down to the very lowest penny.

2264. Does that feeling exist at present?—It does not exist at present, or at least, not to the same extent, because the labourers are more or less independent of the farmers in consequence of the scarcity of men.

2265. Then is it your opinion that the condition of the labourers has been rather improved of late years?—It has certainly.

2266. Do you know of any outrage committed at Rochfort Bridge by a man named Hughes?—I heard something about it.

2267. Do you remember his being placed upon his knees and threatened to be fired at, and being called upon to give up his land?—I heard of it.

2268. Do you happen to know that he is the father of a Catholic priest?—I believe he is.

2269. Do you also know that the person to whom he was to give up the land was a Protestant?—I do not, but it may be so.

2270. Mr. *Maguire.*] As I understand you, you would be rather inclined to give the grand jury a larger share in the apportionment of the compensation tax?—As regards the chargeability of it, the grand jury were very much embarrassed at the last assizes by the wording of the Act; first, they were obliged to place it upon the district in which the murder or other outrage had taken place; and in the second place they thought they were confined by the words "Barony, half-barony, or other district;" in fact, they were unable to make out what the meaning of the words "Other district" at all.

2271. Do you happen to know a case which occurred at the last assizes in King's County, where there was an application by a man named Fox for 150 *l.* compensation for personal injury?—Yes, I do.

2272. Do you know that the grand jury, upon the application of his solicitor for 150 *l.*, volunteered to give him 300 *l.*?—Yes.

2273. And that it was on application to the judge afterwards that that finding was reversed?—Yes, I saw that in the newspapers.

2274. Do you think that 325 *l.* given in the one case, and 800 *l.* given in another, considering the circumstances and the position in life of those people, were too large sums?—Yes, I do think so; but will you allow me to explain that. If I am right in assuming that the object of the Act was to compensate the relatives for the pecuniary loss that they sustained by the deaths of those parties, I have no hesitation in saying that in either of the cases I have referred to, if the death had been occasioned by the negligent conduct of a railway company, they would not, as I believe, have received more than a fifth of the money.

2275. You think the amounts rather large?—I do, extravagantly large.

2276. There is the case I spoke of before the grand jury where an application was made only for 150 *l.*, and a sum of 300 *l.* was sought to be forced by the grand jury upon the applicant?—I know nothing about that, excepting what I saw in the newspapers.

2277. Would you therefore be inclined to enlarge the powers of that body?—Except as regards the chargeability, no. On the contrary, I would be inclined to limit it.

2278. Do you not think that it would be an enormous power to give to the grand jury, if the law allowed them to impose that tax upon the occupants of houses?—I never suggested that it should be levied off the occupants of houses. The tax that I referred to was for extra police, and I said I objected to it, no matter how levied; but that if levied, I thought it better to charge some small amount on houses, rather than levy enormous sums off land.

2279. Do you not think that if the owners of those houses were at all inclined to be loyal, as we may assume them to be, it would have the result of making them exceedingly discontented and disloyal?—I have only given my opinion as to the choice between two evils; I think that a tax of that kind ought not to be levied off the district at all.

2280. You have been asked with reference to wholesale evictions, and you gave one instance of a clearance; have not there been quiet ejectments and evictions in detail going on to a considerable extent in Westmeath and the borders of Meath and King's County?—My answers must be confined to Westmeath, inasmuch as my information extends only to that county.

2281. In Westmeath then has there not been considerable eviction in detail?—There has; there have been occasional cases here and there in which landlords have, under the threat of eviction, induced their tenants to give up and receive some small compensation and go to America, and in that way they have consolidated their properties.

2282. Has there been in that quiet way a good deal of eviction going on in the county?—There has been.

2283. Do you not think that that is one of the causes of ill-feeling?—Manifestly that tends to create it.

2284. Is it within your knowledge that there has been any desire upon the part of owners of property to anticipate the action of the Land Bill by endeavouring to effect the removal of the tenants before the Act came into operation?—Yes, but in very few cases.

2285. Do you know that there have been only a few instances of that?—There have been very few to my knowledge; there were parties who served notice in anticipation of the Land Act, but they would not come under what is properly understood by the term landed proprietors.

2286. But they hold land, and have tenants under them?—Yes.

2287. Would not that endeavour to anticipate the operation of the Land Act rather cause an uneasy feeling in the county?—No, it was not on a sufficiently large scale to cause an uneasy feeling throughout the county with which I am principally connected.

2288. Now with regard to the labouring class, are you of opinion that the condition of the labouring class is such as it should be in the county?—I think that the habitations are bad, but with regard to wages, I do not think the

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farming class can afford to pay much higher wages than they pay at present.

2289. You stated to the Committee that the average wages was from 6*s.* to 7*s.* per week, with a house?—Yes.

2290. What would be the annual letting value of the house; what would the man get such a house for?—I think in an ordinary case, they could scarcely get it under a pound a year, or certainly not less than 15*s.* a year.

2291. Would not that be an infinitesimal addition to the 6*s.* or 7*s.* a week?—It would.

2292. Is it scarcely worth taking into consideration?—It is a great object to a labouring man to get a house at all, because there is such an objection on the part of the proprietors to increase the number of habitations, so that if a man loses a house, it is almost impossible for him to get another.

2293. Do you think it would be a wise thing, as a matter of public policy, to remove any restrictions upon the building of *bonâ fide* labourers' cottages?—Yes, certainly; so that it did not lead to the sub-division of land.

2294. You would endeavour to remove any restriction that stands in the way of building *bonâ fide* labourers' cottages?—Yes, and I would assist the building of them in every legitimate way.

2295. With reference to the labourers' wages, the average, you say, is between 6*s.* and 7*s.* per week; is that enough, do you imagine, for the support of a man and his family?—I think that is a very small sum; but it is a great deal better than what they used to have. I recollect their having not more than 6*d.* a day.

2296. If the Government or Parliament passed a law giving power to suspend the Habeas Corpus Act in certain districts, you would insist or advise that the law officers of the Crown should give a formal certificate in such cases?—I would advise what I have suggested; then people would have the greatest possible confidence in the integrity and capacity of the law officers, and it would be known that a warrant could not be granted unless they were satisfied with the evidence upon which the man had been arrested.

2297. Do you know that really at the present moment it is upon the recommendation of the law advisers of the Crown that the warrants are issued in those cases?—I am not aware.

2298. You do not know, as a matter of fact, that it is so?—I do not know that.

2299. You do not know that, as a general rule, that the law officers of the Crown have anything to do with it?—I do not know what the practice is.

2300. With reference to this alleged confederacy, you think it had its origin in regard to settlement of land questions, do you not?—I do.

2301. And that it has been diverted to other purposes as a means of redressing other grievances?—Yes; in consequence of the landlords not having done anything of late years to provoke the anger of those parties, it has gone into other channels.

2302. Do you not think that the operation of the Land Act, if given time to work, will have a most beneficial effect on the country?—Most certainly I think it will.

2303. It has not had time at present to work?—Not in our part of the country.

2304. Is not there some misconception in the public mind with reference to the nature and value of that Act; that it was represented as something worthless, and as giving no protection?—Yes, it was; and the people, I think, are aware now, having seen the reports of some trials that took place under it, that it affords them, if not a sufficient amount of protection, at all events a very considerable protection.

2305. But at the same time this conviction is only dawning upon the public mind?—That is so; but they are beginning to realize to themselves that it is a most excellent measure for the tenantry.

2306. But that is within recent times?—Yes; since the publication of the reports of the proceedings under it.

2307. But in order to improve the tone of the public mind, speaking of the lower classes of the country, it must take time to work?—Yes; a great deal must depend upon the mode in which the law is administered.

2308. One thing is certain, that there is nothing of a religious character in its provisions?—That is so, in so far as relates to Westmeath.

2309. Do you not find that the clergymen are against those secret societies?—Yes; I have heard it denounced in the most unmeasured terms by the clergy.

2310. Who have done everything in their power to dissuade people from joining, and to induce them to give it up?—What other steps they have taken I do not know, but I have heard it denounced in the most unmeasured terms that they were capable of using both by the Catholic Priests and the Bishops.

2311. Colonel *Wilson Patten.*] You have had an opportunity of seeing the operation of the extra police-tax in the county of Westmeath, have you not?—I have had very frequent opportunies of observing it.

2312. Is it your opinion that it has been effective in the detection of crime?—In my opinion it has had the contrary effect.

2313. It has caused great dissatisfaction, has it not?—Yes, it has not been of the slightest use because the additional police are placed upon the district after the murder has been committed, and remain there for such time as the authorities consider it is essential that they should do; perhaps for two or three or six months up to twelve months, and they are not of the slightest use; they patrol the roads and lie behind hedges, and scour the country, as they say; they are, as I think, not of the slightest use.

2314. Without regard then to the justice of the case, you would recommend that that extra police-tax should not be thrown upon a district?—I should.

2315. Mr. *Chichester Fortescue.*] But you say that the townland suffers for three or six or twelve months from this extra police-tax; do you not believe that the people of that townland would be anxious for no fresh offence to be committed within their boundaries, which would impose that tax upon them again?—I think that the people of the townland under present circumstances are incapable of doing anything to prevent the commission of a second offence.

2316. You stated that that, as far as you could judge, during the time the Habeas Corpus Act was suspended for political offences, you believed that in your county there had only been a single mistake made with reference to the party arrestd?—I am

—I am not saying that that was a mistake. That man was only arrested for a couple of days, and I only say that I believe myself he was not connected with Fenianism; but further than that I could not speak.

2317. That was the only case in which you had any doubt as to the correctness of the arrest?—Yes.

2318. Do you think it would be as easy for the authorities to lay their hands upon parties deserving to be arrested, supposing the same power were to be extended to Ribbon offences?—I doubt that very much; do you mean that they could with the same unerring certainty?

2319. Yes; with the same freedom from the danger of mistake and the danger of arresting and imprisoning innocent parties?—I would not go so far as to say that, because I consider that in political movements of the character of Fenianism the parties that participate in it are known almost to the entire county, as they had, before the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, frequently at public meetings and by letter, and in different ways, made quite public their sympathy with the movement. That is a matter which is perfectly well ascertained.

2320. And therefore you think that it was easier to apply the power in that case without danger of injustice than it would be in the case supposed, namely, of Ribbonism?—That is my opinion.

2321. But, at the same time, I understood you to say you believed that the leaders of the Ribbon Society in the county were well known to the police?—I would very much prefer respectfully to refer you to the police or the resident magistrates upon that subject.

2322. Sir *G. Grey.*] You were asked whether you thought it a reasonable thing that persons for whose protection the police were placed in the district should pay anything towards their maintenance; are you aware that in England and Scotland three-fourths of the expense of any police force that is placed upon any district for the maintenance of the safety of the inhabitants is paid by the inhabitants of the district?—Yes, I am. What I speak of in Ireland is the exceptional character of the taxation.

2323. Does the dissatisfaction with regard to the exceptional character of the tax arise from the fact that the whole expense of the ordinary police is paid out of the public revenue, and not from the locality?—No, it arises from the fact of the parties feeling that they are incapable of preventing the commission of outrages, and that the taxation is placed upon them for the purpose of endeavouring to make them do what they are unable to do.

2324. Were you aware of the Act passed about two years ago, empowering a commission to inquire into trades' union outrages in Sheffield?—I have heard of it.

2325. Do you think if a commission was appointed, with authority derived from Parliament, to compel the attendance of witnesses, and examine those witnesses upon the spot on oath, full indemnity being given to the witnesses from all subsequent civil and criminal proceeding, valuable evidence would be obtained with regard to the Ribbon Society?—I think that no evidence whatever would be obtained by a commission of that character.

2326. *Chairman.*] One question with reference to the organisation of the police; you would recommend a detective force to be added to the existing police force, would you not?—I would recommend making them more of a police force, as distinguished from a military force. The entire organisation of the police force, according to my idea, is defective as a preventive force.

2327. Are you of opinion that the military character of their organisation prevents them from mixing with the people, as a force of a more civilian character would do?—I do; I think that it prevents them from acting as policemen at all.

2328. Do you mean to say that they act entirely as soldiers, and not as what we call policemen in this country?—I do not, but the entire feeling of the body, and of the officers, is that they are a force of a military character; I think that acting as they do so much in bodies interferes with the proper discharge of their duties as policemen.

2329. As a matter of fact, they do mix a good deal with the people, and know a considerable amount of what is going on in the country, do they not?—Yes, I think they do; and I do not think the people entertain any hostility to the constabulary.

2330. But you think that, by some alteration in their organisation, they might know a great deal more than they do?—I think they might be a good deal more effective.

2331. Do you know any reason why Ribbonism should flourish more in Westmeath than in any other parts of Ireland?—There is none that I am aware of; there are other parts of Ireland that have suffered a great deal more from evictions.

2332. You know nothing in the character of the landlords, or the tenants, or of the condition of the labouring classes, which would account for this prevalence of crime in Westmeath?—As distinguished from other parts of Ireland, I do not.

2333. You cannot account for it at all?—I cannot account for it at all.

2334. It has always existed there?—It has always existed there within my recollection.

2335. It never has been completely rooted out?—Never; it has been sometimes dormant, and sometimes active.

Mr. STEPHEN SEED, called in; and Examined.

2336. The *Solicitor General for Ireland.*] I BELIEVE you are Crown Solicitor at present?—I am Senior Crown Solicitor.

2337. For what counties?—Meath and Kildare.

2338. How long have you been Crown solicitor for Meath and Kildare?—For 26 years.

2339. Prior to the commencement of that 26 years, were you Crown solicitor for any other counties?—I was Crown solicitor for the entire Home Circuit, and acting Crown solicitor during several previous years for the whole of the Home Circuit. I was Crown solicitor during the Special Commission in January 1846, which was a very remarkable one.

2340. But before you became Crown solicitor for

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for Meath, King's County, and Kildare, you were Crown solicitor for Westmeath?—Yes, I was.

2341. How long is it since you were first appointed Crown solicitor?—I was appointed in April 1845.

2342. By whom were you appointed?—I was appointed by Lord de Grey, who was the Lord Lieutenant at the time.

2343. You state that you have been acting Crown solicitor also?—I have been Crown solicitor for 25 years, and was acting Crown solicitor for the 18 previous years.

2344. Are you acquainted, as Crown solicitor, with the present condition of the county of Meath?—I am.

2345. Will you inform the Committee what is the present condition of the county of Meath with reference to agrarian crime?—It is very much better than it was before the Meath Special Commission.

2346. When was the Special Commission?—On the 9th of June 1870, last year.

2347. Has the condition of the county improved since the Special Commission of the 9th of June 1870?—Wonderfully.

2348. Is there any difference in point of crime between the portion of Meath adjoining Westmeath, and the portion adjoining the sea?—Yes; the one is comparatively tranquil; altogether tranquil, I may say; that is the eastern side, but the side immediately adjoining Westmeath partakes of the state of Westmeath.

2349. That part of Meath adjoining Westmeath is affected by the Ribbon conspiracy, I believe?—Yes, certainly.

2350. Do you know anything of the condition of the county of Westmeath at present?—I do.

2351. Is crime more prevalent in the county of Westmeath at present than it was in former years?—No; I should say it is almost tenfold less.

2352. When were you first concerned in the county of Westmeath?—In March 1827, and I conducted the Special Commission of 1846; and in the first circuit that I ever went, which was in 1827, that is 45 years ago, my first duty was to fill death warrants for 15 men, 13 of whom were executed, and I think there were 87 or 90 Crown prosecutions at the assizes.

2353. I believe crime is not so bad now as it was in 1846?—It is tenfold less.

2354. Does Ribbon crime exist in Westmeath to a very large extent at the present time?—Very much more than in any other county of Ireland.

2355. Will you state of your own knowledge, as Crown solicitor, the steps which were taken by the Government to suppress agrarian crime in Meath?—I will. I took the liberty of making out a memorandum stating what had been done, and what I think should be done, and I think it would save the time of the Committee very much if I were to read it: "I have given the very important subject of this inquiry all the consideration which an experience of 45 years exclusively devoted to the investigation of crime could bring to bear upon it, and I humbly submit my opinion, with deference and respect, for the consideration of the Committee now assembled for the purpose, as I understand of inquiring first, into the state of crime in certain districts in Ireland. Secondly. Whether the Government have hitherto taken all the proper and legitimate steps within their power, or at their command, for the suppression of crime. Thirdly. Assuming that all proper steps have been taken, whether the Government could have adopted other measures without Parliamentary intervention. Fourthly. If it should be desirable that extreme measures should be adopted, what those measures should be? And, Fifthly. Whether the state of crime in certain districts in Ireland now calls for, and demands, immediate action. With reference to the first question, it appears to me that the state of Westmeath and two or three other districts at the present time does demand extreme steps. Not that I have not known crime in former years to have been twenty or thirty-fold more prevalent than it is now, even in Westmeath, but that the state of Ireland for some years past having been in comparison freer from the commission of serious crime than formerly, it would be most desirable to check its progress and to prevent it spreading again into other districts where, in former years, it existed to a very large extent, but which are now comparatively tranquil. The highly morbid state of some parts of Ireland seems quite beyond the control of ordinary or constitutional remedies, the Government has there to encounter a well-organised system of protection to crime of a particular character. A system which, originating perhaps from a spirit of resistance to injustice, partly real, partly imaginary, derived, at one time, its chief support from the open and undisguised sympathy and connivance of the tenant farmers, and the peasantry who are their dependents. Recent legislation, which is in progress of sapping these sources of support may be assisted, as I consider, by the means hereafter suggested, founded on my conviction that the system now depends solely on terror, continuing to act upon classes that have ceased to regard it with either favour or affection, and would not be unwillingly relieved from its tyranny. Previous to the issuing of the Meath Special Commission in May 1870, and before Westmeath had become so much disturbed, I had hoped, and reported that I did not think that extreme measures were then called for, and although I do believe, as I have already said, that the state of crime demands the adoption of extreme measures at present, still my long experience would induce me to hope that even in the absence of any of those means crime would decrease gradually, as it has done in former years. For instance, in the Queen's County, after the Special Commission in May 1832, when the large number of committals for agrarian crime from August 1831 to May 1832 was 327; when in Westmeath, after the Special Commission in January 1846, when crime was tenfold more than it now is; and when in Meath, in June 1870, crime ran rampant through the entire county (all of which Special Commissions I myself, as Crown solicitor, conducted) serious crime wonderfully decreased, and became comparatively nothing to what it had been before the holding of these Commissions. With reference to the second question, whether the Government have hitherto taken all the proper and legitimate steps within their power, or at their command, for the suppression of crime, I beg to enumerate what the steps were which the Government did take for the suppression of crime. First, they issued two Special Commissions within the last 18 months. Secondly, they sent down additional troops. Thirdly, they sent down additional police.

police. Fourthly, they employed skilled and experienced detectives, selected for the purpose. Fifthly, they appointed additional resident magistrates. Sixthly, they instituted simultaneous and secret searches for arms. Seventhly, they established night patrols throughout the disturbed districts. Eighthly, they offered large rewards. Ninthly, they took under their protection and support all witnesses who gave honest and truthful information and evidence. Tenthly, fines were levied on townlands where murders were committed. Eleventhly, means were afforded to the constabulary officers of paying for private information. Twelfthly, the Attorney General prosecuted in person in all serious cases. Thirteenthly, the Crown solicitors were ordered to investigate all agravated outrages within their districts. Fourteenthly, they enforced the powers given to them under the Peace Preservation Act. And, fifteenthly, the Land Act was passed. This being so, it is obvious and clear that it was impossible to resort to any other means unless with the sanction of Parliament, as will appear in my reply to Question No. 3, namely, whether, if it be deemed advisable that extreme measures should be adopted, what those measures should be? Now it appears to me that the only extreme measures that could be adopted are the following, namely, First, the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act. Secondly, the assimilation of the jury system to the Scotch system, or an entirely new adjustment and supervision of the present jury system. The present jury system continually breaks down. When the country is disturbed it requires a very large amount of moral courage to act uprightly as a juror in an agrarian case. If some of the higher class come forward to do their duty, they may perhaps find themselves in the same jury box with some relations or allies of the prisoner; then the jury disagree, and the honest and faithful jurymen incur all the odium and danger. A class of jurors will be found on all the panels of petty jurors in Ireland, as now constituted, who are wholly unfit to be entrusted with the trial of any prisoner for an agrarian crime. I heard it stated that on an important trial lately three of the jurors had actually subscribed for the defence of the prisoners they were trying. The formation of the petty jury panel is now entirely at the discretion of the sub-sheriff, who is often the friend of, and influenced by the attorney for the prisoners. The high-sheriff himself should form the panel, as was the case in the Queen's County Special Commission before referred to, when he directed the entire tail of the grand jury panel and all the most respectable qualified gentry of the county to be summoned as petty jurors, the result of which was, that in every case tried at that Commission we had from 7 to 11 magistrates of the county to try the cases. Thirdly, to empower the Court of Queen's Bench to change the venue peremptorily (without the present dilatory system of doing so) on the application of the Crown. Fourthly, to empower two or three judges to try certain cases without the intervention of a jury. Now, it may be said that by adopting this latter measure the people will be deprived of their constitutional right; but it would not do so one whit more than the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act. Fifthly, to compel all persons to remain within their dwellings after sunset, as at the time of the Insurrection Act in former years. Sixthly, additional powers to the police to enter public-houses at all times on reasonable causes of suspicion without warrant. Seventhly, additional powers to search suspected houses or suspected persons for documents, papers, and so forth, on reasonable suspicion. Eighthly, no public-house license to be granted beyond a mile from the police barrack. Almost the whole of the crime in the disturbed districts emanates from the Ribbon confederacy; I believe that the organisation of that system is at present more perfect and more complete than at any former period, though crime is comparatively less; and experience proves that as it is one of the chiefest objects of that society to extend its influences to the more peaceful districts, the main object now should be to check its progress, and, if practicable, to destroy its influences. To effect this, it must be admitted, is a most difficult task, and in my opinion the best and most legitimate means of doing so, is by searching inquiry by oral and documentary evidence, and by referring the result of that inquiry for the consideration of Parliament, which would otherwise be deprived of the full means of coming to a conclusion on the great and important question now under consideration. I confess I do not see how it could be otherwise satisfactorily effected, inasmuch as it will urgently require, as doubtless it will receive, all the attention and consideration of many heads to decide whether all or any and which of the foregoing extreme measures should be adopted. Having thus taken the liberty of offering my opinion on the state of crime and its remedies, may I be permitted to add that if it should be deemed advisable to adopt the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, I think it should be confined to the disturbed districts alone and not made general, leaving it to the Lord Lieutenant in Council to extend its operation to such districts as to them might seem expedient. It would never do to include the north of Ireland, for instance, where agrarian outrage is almost unknown, and where loyalty universally prevails. It would be dangerous to risk it there, and would furnish good ground of complaint that the innocent were made to suffer with the guilty. Indeed, it is, in my opinion, matter for grave consideration, whether in any county it should be enforced at present. The spring is already at hand, when abundant employment will be had, and the short nights of summer will afford fewer opportunities for the commission of crime. Let it be held as a sword in the scabbard, ready to be drawn as occasion may require; and if one is to be guided by the experience of very many former years, I would say that crime will now, as then, gradually decrease, and as education extends, and as the condition of the country improves, and the operation of recent legislation becomes more defined and better understood and appreciated, the people will be more content; and instead of opposing and obstructing the administration of the law, they will learn to find in it their surest safeguard and protection. The baneful influences of Ribbonism, which have for so long been felt and feared, will fade away as the country improves, and it is my firm conviction that it will yet, ere long, be banished from the land, and be remembered only as a tale of other times."

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2356. *Chairman.*] You are decidedly of opinion that at present crime is not so rife as it has been

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been at former periods within your experience?—Clearly not.

2357. But investigating cases for trial, have you ever found greater difficulty than you do now in eliciting the truth from witnesses?—I think the difficulties that exist now are as extreme as they were in any former years.

2358. Does that arise from unwillingness to come forward at all, or from prevarication and want of truthfulness when they are examined?—It arises from terror; that they are really afraid to divulge what they know, and in some instances from unwillingness to give information; it is a mixture of terror and unwillingness.

2359. Do you think the unwillingness arises now more from terror than from sympathy with the conspirators?—I think it arises more from terror: that is quite my experience, but in many cases the unwillingness arises from sympathy.

2360. You have seen signs which convinced you that the witnesses were actually labouring under bodily fear?—Many thousands of instances; there have been many cases in which they told me that they could give full information of outrage, but that they dared not; that they would be murdered before they reached their homes.

2361. Are you acquainted with any other parts of Ireland?—I may say that my duties and my avocation being so completely confined to the criminal department, I have made it my study for the past 40 years to make myself acquainted with every part of Ireland, and my opinion of Ireland is this, that although crime does exist to a very considerable extent in Westmeath, and one or two other districts, yet taking Ireland as a whole, I do believe that Ireland is at this moment freer from serious crime than any other country in Europe.

2362. Have you formed any opinion with reference to the cause of the existence of this peculiar class of crime in Westmeath and the neighbouring counties?—It is indigenous almost in the nature of an Irishman to get possession of land. The Ribbon system had originally only one object, which was the extinction of Protestantism.

2363. The Committee have already had evidence of that fact; but why should that system, which exists to such a great extent in Westmeath and the neighbouring counties, have comparatively died out in the counties of Monaghan, Armagh, and Louth?—It has lost its influence there because the people are more enlightened than they were, and even in Westmeath I think many persons are obliged to join the system through terror.

2364. Do you know of any peculiar circumstances in the character of the people, or the landlords, or the labourers, which accounts for its greater prevalence in Westmeath than in the rest of Ireland?—I would answer that by saying that the influences of the Ribbon system are more extended in Westmeath than in other parts. I have stated in my report that the organisation of the Ribbon system at present is more perfect than ever I remember it. In looking over some papers in my own office, I found two very singular documents which were produced in cases which I prosecuted myself. The first contains a description of the Ribbon organisation, which is perhaps the most perfect thing that ever was read, and the second is the Ribbon oath, both of them at large. They are exceedingly interesting documents.

2365. Will you read them?—The description of the society is as follows:—"There are five distinct orders in the society: 1st, the county delegates; 2nd, the parish masters; 3rd, the body masters; 4th, the committee-men; 5th, the mere Ribbonman. These closely resemble the military grades of colonel, captain, subaltern, serjeant, and private. The county delegate is elected by a majority of the parish masters connected with the county. The delegates meet quarterly, and their meetings are principally held in the large manufacturing towns, such as Manchester, Glasgow, Liverpool, &c. At these meetings the passwords and signs (in the parlance of the society called 'goods') for the ensuing quarter are agreed on, and it is the duty of each delegate to disseminate them in his own district without delay; at those meetings, also, the place at which they are next to meet is always decided on. All such meetings are held in some public-house which has a private room. They gradually assemble, so as to attract no attention, and, when assembled, they appoint five or six of their own body to act as tylers, whose office it is to bring in such drink as they may order pending their deliberations, and to exclude all who are not in full possession of the signs and pass-words. Having elected a chairman, their own wrongs and grievances, or those of their neighbours, are discussed, obnoxious landlord, agent, or bailiff is placed on his trial, and, if pronounced guilty, sentenced by a majority of votes to such punishment, involving death or the destruction of property, as the case may seem to them to merit; and when the doomed man is pronounced unfit to live, or to undergo a minor punishment, it is the duty of the delegates of the district in which he resides to have that sentence carried into effect before the next quarterly meeting, and woe befall him if his mission be not performed. But although responsible for the sentence being carried into full effect, the means of doing so are supplied by another and (generally) distant district; so that, being strangers, if those who commit the murder or outrage escape immediate apprehension, there is little hope of their being identified. The deed of blood is usually done in implicit obedience to command; but if the party commanded should demur, it is done by lot. If he escapes immediate detection money is collected and he is sent out of the country; if detected, he is supplied with means for his defence. At his trial *witnesses* are also provided for him. The delegate necessarily incurs expense by attending the quarterly meetings. He is thus reimbursed: it is his duty to have some fit man to act as master in each parish. These are parish masters, the second order. On his return from the quarterly meeting he calls a meeting of his parish masters at some fair or market, the signs and pass-words agreed on at the meeting of delegates are communicated, and for them each parish master pays him the sum of 5 *s.*; this compensates him for his outlay, and even gives him a profit. The parish master requires to be reimbursed; he is bound to have within his parish a certain number at his command; they are called body masters, and form the third order. To each of them he gives the 'goods,' and from each he receives in return the sum of 1 *s.* The body master has his duty to discharge, and has to select some 20 or 30 choice lads upon

upon whom reliance can be placed. They are called committee-men, and form the fourth order. To them the 'goods' are communicated, for which they pay the body master the sum of 6*d.* To the committee-men is entrusted almost invariably, the execution of the sentence passed by the delegates. The fifth grade is that of the ordinary Ribbonman, who, if he distinguishes himself by acts of outrage, waylaying, malicious injury to property, &c., is considered worthy of promotion. The delegates, parish masters, body masters, are the only persons who have authority to make a member, which is done by administering an oath, and this is always done in some retired place, such as the back of a ditch, no one ever being present except the person who administers the oath and he who takes it, so that if information was given there could be no corroboration of the testimony.

The signs and pass words now only remain to be noticed. They are contrived with great ingenuity, the latter being an allusion to some ordinary passing event, and of so simple a character as not to awaken suspicion. There are three classes of pass-words, which may be called the casual, the quarrelling, and the night words. The following were lately in use. *Casual.* *Q.* What do you think of the times? *A.* We are expecting a change. *Q.* Of what kind? *A.* Of the present Ministry. *Quarrelling.* Don't be contentious, sir? *A.* Not with you. *Night.* *Q.* The clouds are heavy? *A.* A storm is at hand. Signs. The right hand rubbing the back of the head, the left thumb being in the left waistcoat pocket." The following is the oath: "I (A.B.) hereby agree to become a true and loyal member of this society, and I solemnly swear before Almighty God, to be true and loyal to the brotherhood, and to each member of the same, and I will be obedient to my committee and superior officers, and agree to all their articles, laws, rules, and regulations, that have been since the commencement, and all amendments added thereto, and to perform all duties imposed on me with loyalty, faith, and fidelity; and I swear that neither hopes or fears, rewards or punishments, shall induce me to give evidence against any brother or brothers for any act or expression of theirs done or made collectively or individually: And in pursuance of this obligation, I swear to aid, as best as I can, with purse and person, any brother or brothers who may be in distress; and I further swear to owe no allegiance to any Protestant or heretic sovereign, ruler, prince, or potentate, and that I will not regard any oath delivered to me by them or their subjects, be they judge, magistrate, or else, as binding: And I swear aid as best I can, any brother or brothers who may be on trial for any act or expression of theirs, before magistrate, judge, jury, or else, and to be ready at all times to aid by every means in my power to assist in preserving his or their liberation; and, if myself a witness, to disregard any oath delivered to me on such occasions by judge, jury, magistrate, counsel, clerk, lawyer, official, or else, and that I will not regard such oath as binding: And in revenge for the sufferings of our forefathers, and protection of our rights, I further solemnly swear to aid as best as I can in exterminating and extirpating all Protestants and heretics out of Ireland or elsewhere; to hunt, pursue, shoot, and destroy all Protestant or heretic landlords, proprietors, or employers; and also to hunt, shoot, pursue, and destroy all landlords or proprietors belonging to the Church of Rome, should he or they evict his or their tenants from any house, land, home, or holding of theirs: And I further solemnly swear to aid as best as I can, in burning down, sacking, and destroying all Protestant or heretic churches or places of worship, and all houses used as such by members of different heretical denominations in this country, and to level the same to the ground: I also solemnly swear to have no intercourse, communion, or trade, neither to buy or sell, barter or exchange, give or take, or have any dealings whatever with said Protestants or heretics, unless on such occasions as cannot be avoided: I also swear to defend the farmer, the poor man, the widow, and the orphans of any brother, or former brother, against the oppression of the landlords and the tyranny of Saxon laws; and I further solemnly swear to do all in my power to procure the independence of Ireland, and aid, as best I can, in allowing none but Irishmen to possess Irish land, and Ireland for the Irish. I also solemnly swear to shoot, destroy, hunt, and pursue to death any former brother who may turn informer or traitor, or who may refuse to perform any duty ordered by his committee, or superior officers, or any duty which may fall by lot, or otherwise, to execute; and I agree that my person shall be at all times at their service to go wherever required, or do whatever sent, and also to aid by every means in my power any brother or brothers of this society executing the orders of other committees or officers belonging thereto, though not in my district; and to aid, as best I can, he or them in the performance of their duty; and I most solemnly swear to keep all secrets, pass-words, signs, orders, or otherwise belonging to this society, and that I shall never divulge the same by word of mouth, or otherwise; and I swear never to mark, write, or indite with pen, pencil, stone, chalk, or any other mineral or substance above or under wood, above or under water, above or under land, above or under air, on the sea or elsewhere, or to use therewith any substance whatever above or under, &c., be it herb, shrub, tree, wood, liquid, mineral, or else, above or below this earth, above or under, &c.; or to use therewith any liquid, marking fluid, ink, or any marking substance whatever, above or under, &c., in the sea or elsewhere, to betray or inform of any signs, secrets, pass-words, orders, doings, actions, or expressions that have been, that are being, or that will be belonging to this brotherhood."

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2366. Are you able to give to the Committee any opinion with reference to the causes peculiar to Westmeath, and not common to the rest of Ireland, why Ribbonism should have its head quarters there rather than in other parts of Ireland?—I think it is very difficult to answer that question. I cannot, without further consideration, reply to it.

2367. It has been suggested that the labouring classes, in Westmeath, are extremely bad off; are they worse off in Westmeath than in other parts of Ireland with which you are acquainted?—No, certainly not.

2368. Do you think that there have been many cases of extreme severity on the part of landlords?—In Meath there have been, certainly.

2369. Recently?—At present there is one very large proprietor who, I have reason to know, is very severe as a landlord, and I think the proceedings he took very much caused the state of

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the county of Meath in the latter part of 1869 and 1870.

2370. What do you mean by being very severe?—I mean in the way of ejecting tenants and enforcing the strict payment of rent; that is considered a crime in Ireland, although the landlord is perfectly justified in doing so; but this gentleman I refer to has served a vast number of ejectments in the last year or 18 months, and I understand that he is still ejecting several tenants.

2371. Sir *G. Grey.*] Were those ejectments for non-payment of rent?—They were ejectments for non-payment of rent, and of course, overholding possession.

2372. *Chairman.*] Still severe landlords are found in other parts of Ireland, are they not?—No doubt of it.

2373. Does this instance to which you refer occur in a part of Meath bordering on Westmeath?—No, it is rather in a neighbourhood which may be said to border upon Westmeath, but not very proximate to it; but it was a very disturbed district where this occurred.

2374. Does the Ribbon system exist in that part of the county of Meath where this severe landlord of whom you have spoken resides?—Certainly.

2375. But you are not aware that the landlords of Westmeath have been distinguished by any unusual acts of severity?—Certainly; I have not known of it.

2376. Mr. *Hardy.*] With respect to the special commission in Meath to which you adverted, were you able to get evidence of the crimes for which convictions were obtained, before the jury?—No, with the exception of one case. I was only able to get evidence in one case, which was entirely arising from the state of terror existing in the county at the time.

2377. I believe you are not the Crown solicitor for the county of Westmeath now?—No, but I have had a great deal of experience in it.

2378. You know that there are no cases to present to the juries there at all now, in consequence of this system of terrorism?—Yes, in consequence of that.

2379. So that a special commission would be perfectly useless, because there is no evidence to present to the juries?—I would not go so far as to say that, because I think that with proper efforts juries might be had.

2380. I am speaking of the question of crimes, not of juries; there are no detected crimes to bring before juries in Westmeath?—They fall astonishingly short in the detection of crime at present; one would have expected a vast deal more to be done.

2381. Sir *G. Grey.*] If a special commission was sent there, would it have any cases to try?—Not at present, I am quite sure.

2382. Mr. *Bruen.*] You spoke of the landlords of Westmeath not being guilty of any unusual acts of severity; do you know any landlords who have been guilty of any acts of severity at all?—I do not mean to say that; I say it is not within my knowledge that they have.

2383. You spoke of the case of a landlord in Meath who was a very severe landlord?—Yes.

2384. Could you specify to the Committee the acts of severity that he has committed?—Such as resorting to legal proceedings by ejectment for non-payment of rent, and for overholding possession. In ordinary times those are quite the proper rights of the landlord, but in consequence of the state of the county they are deemed a peculiar hardship, and at this moment he cannot leave his own gate without fear of being shot.

2385. You speak of a landlord who ejects for non-payment of rent as committing an act of severity?—It is looked upon as an act of severity. If I was asked my own opinion, I would say that it was not an act of severity; it is quite the landlord's right and quite his duty, but the tenants and people who live about him might think quite the reverse; he is perfectly justified in ejecting his tenant for non-payment, but the tenants do not look on it in that way, they look upon it as a sin; I know officially that four police are constantly obliged to be about his house.

2386. I am not to understand that you personally consider him to be a very severe landlord?—He is only acting upon his rights.

2387. Am I right in understanding you to say that the enforcement of the payment of rent was looked upon by the people in that district as an act of severity?—Clearly; there is no doubt about it.

2388. Mr. *Downing.*] Do I understand you to say that people sympathise with the man who holds land and who will not pay?—I do say that.

2389. In the case of a man evicted for non-payment of rent, his eviction is looked upon as a crime?—It is.

2390. Even though he owes two years' rent?—No matter to what extent he owes rent, I should say he has the sympathy of all those people.

2391. Has any case come before you as Crown solicitor where any man who had evicted a tenant who owed him a year and a half's rent, or less than that, had been either threatened or injured?—Yes, one very remarkable case. About a year ago there was a very respectable man who had spent all his life in the constabulary; he had saved a little money, and he had purchased a small quantity of land in the county of Meath, very near the borders of Westmeath. His tenant did not pay him the rent, and he ejected the tenant, which gave great offence to the Ribbon persons about there, and they waylaid him coming from the market of Trim on the following week, dragged him from his cart, and battered his brains to atoms in the road, merely because he ejected the man for non-payment of rent; it was a very aggravated case, because, although he evicted the man for non-payment of rent, he made him a present of an acre and a half of land elsewhere.

2392. When you talk of ejecting tenants for overholding, you refer to tenants who had previously been served with a notice to quit?—Yes.

2393. Did I understand you to say that the sub-sheriff was frequently influenced by the solicitor employed for the accused?—Most frequently; I know cases of it myself.

2394. Do you confine that observation to your own county, or do you say that it is a matter which has occurred elsewhere?—I answer the question this way: I have seen by the acts of the sub-sheriff that he was influenced by the prisoner's attorney; I cannot prove that he receives money, or that he is bribed by him, but for a person who attends the criminal courts so constantly as I do, it is very easy to observe the influence the prisoner has with the sub-sheriff.

2395. Will you give the Committee the grounds,

grounds, or the facts, upon which you make that imputation upon the sub-sheriff?—I will, with the greatest pleasure. I think that the state of the petty jury panels in Ireland at this moment is perfectly frightful; it is utterly absurd at present, in my opinion, to expect that justice can be effectually administered if the petty jury panels are not amended. Now, for instance, take the jury empanelled for the special commission in Meath last June; I would not have returned that panel, nor would I, as Crown solicitor, have ventured to prosecute a case for the Government at the quarter sessions if the persons returned on that panel were to try the cases; I knew them to be influenced by fear; I knew some of them to be implicated in the Ribbon conspiracy, and quite unfit to try any case.

2396. Did you make any representation of that very important fact to the Government?—I did.

2397. When did you make the representation?—I had a consultation at the Castle with the Attorney General, and the Attorney General was quite shocked, as he well might be, when I handed him the panel for the special commission of Meath. He said to me, "What do you say to this?" I said, "Leave the matter to me, I will select a jury;" and three days before the commission opened I wrote to the inspector of the county, and desired that he would have every sub-inspector from each district in the county before me, in order that I might go through the panel and ascertain the character of each juror; the consequence was that I set aside 47 of the gentlemen, and I succeeded in getting a jury of six Roman Catholics and six Protestants, one of whom was a Presbyterian; so that there were the three great sects represented upon that jury; and I think, as regards the state of the panel at the present time, a great deal might be done by a little previous trouble and inquiry.

2898. There was a conviction in that case?—Yes, there was a conviction, and that tranquilised the county of Meath up to this moment.

2399. Does not your objection to the mode of returning the panel of jurors in the trial of criminal offences extend to the north of Ireland as well as to Westmeath?—I think the panels in the north of Ireland are generally better; I think the sub-sheriffs in the north of Ireland are a more respectable set of men, and not so likely to be influenced as the sub-sheriffs of our own part of Ireland.

2400. Are you aware that a sheriff of a northern county was removed from his office because of the improper panel he returned?—I am.

2401. I believe the sub-sheriff is appointed by the high sheriff?—Always.

2402. And the high sheriff is responsible for his acts?—Certainly.

2403. If I understand you rightly, you are of opinion that if the law was put rigorously into force, and the jury empannelled were properly returned, and the Crown solicitors discharged their duty generally, as you did in this case, that would be quite sufficient for the purpose of bringing those parties who commit agrarian crimes to justice?—I am quite sure it would be so; at all events there would be a larger number of verdicts on truthful evidence than there is now, because no matter what the truth may be in the cases tried by the present jury panels, it is almost impossible to get a jury to find a verdict.

2404. Did you know the late Sir Matthew Barrington?—Yes.

2405. He was Crown solicitor, I believe, for the greater part of Munster?—For the entire of Munster, Clare, Limerick, Kerry, and Cork.

2406. And was a man of great experience?—No man more so.

2407. He conducted a great many Commissions?—He did; he and I were examined before a Committee in 1839.

2408. He stated, in answer to a question put to him in 1852: "I always had an opinion that the ordinary law, vigorously and well administered, was the most effectual remedy for suppressing disturbances"?—That is thoroughly my opinion.

2409. The number of crimes that have been committed in Westmeath recently are few in comparison with those that were committed in former years?—I should say twentyfold less.

2410. And are of a recent date?—They are.

2411. I believe that some parties have been made amenable by arrest for some of the recent outrages, and are in custody?—Yes, certainly.

2412. And, possibly, others may be arrested for other outrages which have been committed?—No doubt.

2413. So that although they are not all made amenable at present, a certain portion have been, and the entire of them may be?—There is no question that they may be.

2414. And you think that a special commission for Westmeath may have the effect that special commissions have had upon many other occasions within your knowledge, of putting an end totally to crime in that district?—I am so strongly of that opinion, that I took the liberty of saying the other day to one of the law officers, that if there was even one clear and undoubted case in the county of Westmeath of agrarian crime, I would issue a commission for that county; and I do thoroughly believe that a special commission there would have fully as good results as the special commission for Meath last year had.

2415. Sir *G. Grey.*] Is there a case now that could be tried there with sufficient evidence to go to trial?—Of my own knowledge I could not say, but I do not think there is.

2416. Mr. *Downing.*] Is there at present any person in custody?—There is no person in custody for trial.

2417. You appear to be well acquainted with the county of Meath?—I am, and have been for 40 years and more.

2418. Are you acquainted with the parishes of ——— and ———?—Yes, I know ———; it is the worst part of the county.

2419. Are you aware that at this moment there are 14 families under ejectment in that parish?—I should say very probably there are.

2420. And are not all those upon notice to quit?—I could not take upon myself to answer that question. I believe they are, but I have no official means of knowing that.

2421. Are you aware that those parties have actually paid up every shilling of rent they owe?—That is beyond my department altogether.

2422. Mr. *Russell Gurney.*] You produced a copy of an oath here; will you tell the Committee when that was obtained, and how?—Those two documents that I have produced arose out of a very

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a very celerated Ribbon trial we had in Meath some years ago. The best Ribbon approver I ever examined in my life was a man who was arrested in Manchester; he was a very old Ribbon man, and he gave us the complete organisation of the Ribbon system; he gave us the oath.

2423. How long ago was that?—It will be 12 or 14 years ago, but I believe the organisation to be exactly as it is now from what I have seen of Ribbonism since, and from what I know from documents in my own office. I believe those are perfectly true; and Dr. Battersby, my leading counsel, said that he could swear to them from his own experience of Ribbon cases which we have prosecuted since.

2424. Were the parties convicted in that case?—They were, and they were transported from the dock and not sent back to gaol.

2425. Where from?—From Trim, in the county of Meath.

2426. Were those documents put in as part of the evidence upon the trial?—Yes.

2427. By the approver?—They were returned to me as Crown solicitor. I handed them in to the clerk of the Crown, and they were returned.

2428. Was it the approver who produced them?—There were certain documents found on the person against whom the approver gave evidence, and it became our duty to ascertain whether those documents were Ribbon documents or not; the only way to ascertain that was by examining a Ribbon man.

2429. Mr. *Pemberton.*] I think you referred to two cases of eviction; I am not speaking of the last case mentioned by the honourable Member for the county of Cork, but you stated that in Meath there had been several evictions, which have been considered as acts of cruelty and so treated?—Yes.

2430. Were any of those evictions to your knowledge for causes other than non-payment of rent?—I think some of them were for overholding possession.

2431. In the cases as to which you were asked just now by the honourable Member for Cork county, you stated you did not know what were the causes of those evictions, or whether they were only notices to quit?—I could not say that; that is not within my province at all.

2432. There can be no evictions now excepting under the Land Bill passed last year, when they would be cases for compensation under that Act?—I am not competent to answer a question of that kind, because that is more a question of civil law; it is not connected with my department at all.

2433. You have not in your recollection the particular clauses of the Act?—No, I have not.

2434. As far as I understand your evidence, the only remedy that you suggest for this state of things is that the law as it stands at present should be more rigidly enforced, and that there should be an alteration in constructing the panel of the jurors?—Yes, that is the principal one.

2435. Would that have any immediate operation?—It would not have any immediate operation, as it must await the assizes and quarter sessions, but in my memoranda there are some remedies that might be acted upon immediately. None of those extreme remedies that I have recommended can be put in force immediately, as they must have the sanction of Parliament first; for instance, the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, and the trial by judges without a jury, and the alteration of the jury system, in those cases the law must be altered.

2436. Would any of those remedies which you suggest be so immediate in their operation as the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act?—I think the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act would be the quickest.

2437. Did I not understand you to say that there was very great difficulty in obtaining evidence in any case of agrarian crime?—It is almost impossible to gain evidence of any kind.

2438. But no system which would not facilitate this means of acquiring evidence would at all help to check those crimes?—The only means of acquiring evidence is, I think, as far as it would be practicable, to put an end to the Ribbon system, because that is the secret of the whole thing.

2439. But is not that absence of evidence the root of the whole thing?—I think so.

2440. Would any attempt to enforce the law as it stands at present in any way facilitate the getting of evidence?—Not as long as the Ribbon organisation remains as it stands now; it would be altogether hopeless to attempt to get evidence.

2441. Would your suggestion of altering the panel of jurors facilitate the procuring of evidence?—It would not facilitate the procuring of evidence, but it would facilitate the administration of justice wonderfully when the case came to be tried.

2442. You are of opinion that when you had got the evidence the alteration of the panel would facilitate the administration of justice?—Certainly.

2443. Then nothing would facilitate the obtaining of evidence out of all those remedies that you have suggested, except the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act?—That is my impression; and I would not say that even in the present state of Westmeath the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act should be put in force, because I have a very strong opinion that crime will decrease gradually in that county as it has done in other places.

2444. Would you let this state of things go on in the meantime?—I have taken the liberty of saying that I would pass the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, and hold it over the heads of the people, and if that is not found to be efficacious I would put it in force. I would give the power of suspending it, but I would be far from advising that it should be acted upon at present, except in case of necessity.

2445. Mr. *Gregory.*] I think you stated that there have been very considerable evictions in Meath?—There have in some particular instances. I cannot mention them.

2446. But in that county there have been very considerale evictions and consolidation of farms, have they not?—Yes, in the district I alluded to.

2447. Has the condition of the tenants that were evicted become very miserable; have they dwindled down into the condition of labourers?—In some instances they have.

2448. Is it true that the habitations of the labouring class in Meath, as was described in the Report of the Poor Law Commissioners, are of a most miserable description?—I am sorry to say that there is a great deal of truth in that.

2449. Is there a great deal of discontent on the part of the labouring population on account of the condition of their houses?—I should not say great discontent, but I have heard them complain of it myself.

2450. If anything was done to amend the condition of their habitations should you say it would tend to ameliorate their condition very much?—It would be a most important improvement.

2451. Mr. *Maguire.*] Are not rents generally well paid in Westmeath?—They are, and in Meath also.

2452. With reference to this organisation and its character, do you not find that the Catholic clergy are very much averse to this Ribbon Society, and that they try to put it down?—Will you allow me to answer that question by very extraordinary proof: not very long ago I was investigating a case of murder in Meath, and the Roman Catholic clergyman there gave me very great assistance indeed, so much so, that I thanked him after the investigation was over, and he said, "I will tell you an extraordinary fact; I would have helped you very much more, but of late years the Roman Catholic clergymen hear nothing of what is going to be done in the country; formerly they used to be told everything, and I could have told you everything years ago, but from some reason or other they withhold every information of everything that is going on in the country from their clergy.

2453. Are not the Roman Catholic clergymen, as far as you can see, most anxious to put an end to Ribbonism?—They state so to me.

2454. Have you any doubt that they are most anxious to put an end to that pernicious system?—I have no doubt of it; and as far is Fenianism was concerned, they were most anxious to put an end to that.

Monday, 27th March 1871.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. Bruen.
Mr. Disraeli.
Mr. Downing.
Mr. Chichester Fortescue.
Mr. Gregory.
Sir George Grey.
Mr. Russell Gurney.
Mr. Hardy.
The Marquis of Hartington.
Mr. James.
Mr. Maguire.
Colonel Wilson Patten.
Mr. Pemberton.
Mr. Plunket.
Viscount Sandon.
Mr. Serjeant Sherlock.
The Solicitor General for Ireland.

THE MARQUIS OF HARTINGTON, IN THE CHAIR.

Mr. JOHN JULIAN, called in; and Examined.

Mr. *Julian.*

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2455. *Chairman.*] You are Crown Solicitor for the county of Westmeath and King's County, are you not?—I am.

2456. What is your duty in connction with trials in criminal cases?—My duty is, directly on the discovery of any evidence, to investigate every circumstance connected with the case, to examine the witnesses, to give briefs to the counsel, to have the bills prepared, and, in fact, to conduct in every way the prosecution.

2457. The evidence is brought before you by the police or the magistrates?—Yes, generally. It is reduced to the shape of informations, and the copies of the informations are sent to me. Frequently, when any facts are discovered which may be reduced to informations, I am directed by the Government to go to the particular locality and assist the magistrates in taking the informations.

2458. Does any information or evidence come before you except on oath?—Yes, sometimes before the information is taken. I see the witness, and afterwards, when the information is taken, and when preparing for trial, I examine the witnesses. These preliminary and subsequent examinations are not on oath; the informations are.

2459. Do you find any or great difficulty in eliciting the truth in Ribbon or agrarian cases from witnesses?—Difficulty amounting, I might almost say, to impossibility.

2460. Do you observe frequently any difference in the conduct of the witnesses in the preliminary examination from that before the Court?—There is often a very great difference.

2461. Does it sometimes occur that witnesses come forward immediately after the occurrence of some outrage in which they have been personally injured, and subsequently refuse to give sworn evidence?—That frequently occurs. With the permission of the Committee I will just illustrate that by referring to the state of things which occurred at the last assizes for the county of Westmeath. On that occasion the number of cases returned for trial was 19; of those, six cases were of the ordinary social crimes; burglaries and robberies of money, assaults, &c. In those cases there was no difficulty whatever; there was every evidence that could be brought to bear upon the case forthcoming, and fairly given; that left 13 cases to be accounted for. Out of those 13, in six cases, the only material witnesses were the constabulary; the only identifying witnesses; in those cases, therefore, there was no difficulty as to the evidence. That leaves seven to be accounted for. Out of those seven there were three cases in which the witnesses swore distinct informations, and at the trial, or at the assizes, they all departed from those informations, and those three cases consequently fell through. Two out of the remaining four cases were cases in which the witnesses adhered to their informations, and there the jury question met us; there was a difference in the jury in those two cases, and the trials stand over. The two other cases were cases of threatening letters, in which there is always great difficulty in tracing the handwriting, and in those two cases the trials were postponed; but I may observe, that in the two cases, and the only two cases of agrarian crime in which witnesses other than the constabulary came forward to give material evidence, each of those witnesses is now protected by two constables, and their lives are not considered safe without them.

2462. Did you obtain any conviction at the last assizes?—Yes; in the cases in which the constabulary were witnesses, four of them I should say were for having arms in a proclaimed district without a license; there was no difficulty in those cases; the prisoners pleaded guilty, I think, in three out of the four. Then there was another case in which the constabulary were the witnesses, in which the man charged was caught in the fact; there there was no difficulty, and the only remaining one of the constabulary cases, was Supple's case.

2463. In the case of the witnesses who did not adhere to the informations, did they contradict the evidence which they had at first given, or did they refuse to give any?—They professed not to know the persons whom they had antecedently identified. In one case a witness said that he only identified the prisoner by his voice, and that he had only heard him speak a year and a half before; he got out of his previous information in that way.

2464. Is it your impression that the aversion to giving evidence upon the part of witnesses arises from sympathy with the accused, or from fear?—

fear?—With regard to witnesses, I think that it arises from fear, because the witnesses are almost invariably taken from the persons injured, and even the injury done to them in these agrarian cases is often but preliminary to a future and further injury; so that it is but natural to assume that they cannot have sympathy with the persons who inflict upon them injury, and threaten future injury; therefore, I think, that the objection to give evidence upon the part of witnesses arises from fear.

2465. Have you often observed that they appeared to be under the influence of fear?—There was one very remarkable case of that kind at the last assizes; it was that of a man named Ryan, who had sworn informations in an agrarian case against a man named Crum, and three others. When he came before the grand jury he professed ignorance of what he had sworn in his informations, and the grand jury sent to me and told me that this man could not tell anything; so I went to him; the man was pale, and in evident trepidation. I said to him, "Did you not tell me, the day before yesterday, that Crum was the man who actually assaulted you?" and he said "I did;" and one of the grand jury dexterously asked him, "Were the other three persons present at the time?" and he said they were; and on that evidence the grand jury found the bill; but when the bill came before the petty jury, he denied all knowledge of the men, and the parties were acquitted; but the man was labouring under the greatest possible fear and apprehension.

2466. Do you think that that fear arises from apprehension of violence by some organised conspiracy?—I have not the least doubt of it.

2467. Have the provisions of the Peace Preservation Act, with reference to compensation in the case of personal injury, come under your notice?—In many instances. There were two cases in the county of Westmeath in which, by order of the Government, I, as Crown Solicitor of the county, conducted the cases, and took all the preliminary proceedings; those were cases in which two men were murdered within the last three or four months, and in those cases compensation was given by the grand jury. In some of the cases there were appeals to the judge, but the decisions of the grand jury were affirmed. I had also two cases in the King's County, in which I acted by order of the Government; and in those two cases also the decisions of the grand jury were affirmed.

2468. Are you aware upon what principle the grand jury assess the compensation given?—They assess it upon an estimate of the value of the life of the person who has been murdered.

2469. Do they receive evidence with reference to the value of that life?—I produced to them the succession duty tables, which estimate for the purposes of the succession duty the value of an annual life income, and they adopted that as regards a portion of the income. In one of the cases, that of a man named Dowling, he had a fixed income of 2*s.* a day; he had been a serjeant in the army, and had a pension, and the grand jury took that at the highest rate, for it was a certain life income; and then they made an estimate of the profits of his employment upon a less certain scale, making deductions from it.

2470. Was it your duty to ask the grand jury to present a certain sum?—Yes; I should say with regard to that, that there must be certain preliminary notices served upon certain official persons in the county; they must be advertised in the papers in the same way as the grand jury notices, and they must be posted upon every police barrack in the barony within which the outrage is committed. Those notices state the sum which is demanded as compensation by the representatives of the person who is murdered. All that was done in these cases. The public have first notices of the demand, which is made, and of the application which is going to be brought before the grand jury.

2471. Does anyone come forward upon the part of the ratepayers to obtain any diminution of the sum?—Yes, in all the cases which I referred to there was an attendance on the part of the ratepayers.

2472. Have you had any opportunity of judging what has been the effect of those provisions of the Act?—Those provisions of the Act have never been carried into effect in such a way as to enable me to form any opinion upon that subject until the last assizes. It is now too soon, perhaps, to form an opinion, grounded on experience; but I have not the slightest doubt that these provisions are calculated to have a most beneficial effect.

2473. By whom is it decided upon what area the compensation is to be levied?—By the grand jury.

2474. And what means have they of arriving at a conclusion?—They are presumed to have the greatest local knowledge of the county. The grand jury is composed of 23 of the leading men of the county. They make their own estimate from their knowledge of the facts and circumstances of the case; and any ratepayer who is dissatisfied with their decision has the right of appeal to the judge.

2475. Do you have anything to say with respect to the district upon which the compensation is to be levied?—No, I only produce such evidence as may assist the grand jury in the conclusion which they may come to upon the subject.

2476. You are acquainted with the working of the Peace Preservation Act in general, are you not?—I am.

2477. Are you of opinion that there are any other provisions of the Act which are valuable?—I think that the 23rd, the 25th, the 26th, and the 39th sections, with which last one we have been now dealing, are highly valuable.

2478. Is it your opinion that they are sufficient to deal with the state of things which exists in Westmeath?—I think they are not.

2479. Have you considered what further measures would be sufficient?—I have, but the question is a very difficult one. My opinion is, that such evidence can be brought before the Executive Government in Ireland as will satisfy them of the criminality of certain leaders of Ribbon outrages, even though that evidence is not such as would lead to a conviction on a trial; and I think that in the present state of the country it would be quite justifiable upon the part of the Government when so satisfied, to take the most coercive measure to remove those persons from the power of doing further injury.

2480. Then you would recommend the local suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act?—Most certainly.

2481. When the Habeas Corpus Act was suspended at the time of the Fenian conspiracy, did

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cases of arrest under it come under your notice?—Scarcely at all. I live in a very quiet part of the King's County, and we had no Fenianism at all there, so that I have very little personal knowledge of the working of those arrests; but it is a matter of public notoriety that they stamped out Fenianism.

2482. Did you ever hear of cases in which injustice was said to have been committed; cases where the wrong man was said to have been taken up?—Such rumours will always be circulated, but I consider that a great deal more injury is done to the innocent by the existence and spread of crime than by any efforts that could be made to suppress it.

2483. Do you think that with sufficient evidence, an ordinary jury in Westmeath would be likely to give a fair verdict?—That depends, in my opinion, upon the indictment that is sent up to them. If the indictment is for a misdemeanour, I think the probability is that you may get a very good jury in Westmeath.

2484. But if the indictment is of another description, what would happen?—If the indictment is for a felony, then if there be one prisoner he has what is called 20 peremptory challenges, and if there are two men tried together they have 40 peremptory challenges; and in that case, according to the present constitution of the panel, in Westmeath I think that a conviction for an agrarian offence is hopeless.

2485. Do you attach considerable importance to the provision of the Act which enables the venue to be changed?—Yes, I attach importance to it; but I think that there ought to be greater facility for change of venue than is given by that section of the Act.

2486. It is not a very simple process, I believe?—First of all, there must be an indictment sent up, and found.

2487. The bill must be found by the grand jury?—The bill must be found by the grand jury, and then the Attorney General must apply to the Court of Queen's Bench, and that must give the case a good deal the character of a State trial; all that appears to me to be very desirable to be avoided.

2488. What mode would you recommend?—I think, if it could be managed, the Attorney General ought to have the power, upon the informations being taken by suggestion or otherwise, to direct the trial to take place in any other county, and leave to the prisoner a power of applying to change the venue if he felt himself aggrieved, the Crown paying all the expenses which the prisoner would incur by the change; and if he succeeded in changing the venue, also the expense to be thus incurred, because under the present system, the time which necessarily elapses between the commission of an offence and the trial, if the venue is changed, gives such an advantage to a prisoner in a district like Westmeath, where every influence is brought to bear upon witnesses and others, as greatly to decrease the chance of conviction.

2489. Do you think that witnesses would give their opinion more freely if the venue were changed?—I should think that it might have some effect, but I think that the influences which are brought to bear upon witnesses are local. The witnesses appear to me to feel that these agrarian combinations are stronger than the law, and that they are more safe in falling back upon them, than in relying upon the protection of the law.

2490. In the evidence which you have given before this Committee, do you draw any distinction between the county of Westmeath and King's County?—The greatest distinction. Agrarian crime prevails to any extent only in those parts of the King's County which adjoin the county of Westmeath; the part of the King's County in which I reside is, I might say, as free from almost all crime as any other part of Ireland.

2491. And when agrarian crime does take place in the quiet part of King's County, is it possible to obtain information about it?—The difficulty is not quite so great as it is in Westmeath, but it is very great.

2492. Even in the more quiet part of the King's County?—I think that it would be very difficult to get evidence, even in the more quiet parts of King's County.

2493. But as a matter of fact, agrarian crime does not prevail to a large extent over your part of King's County?—Certainly not.

2494. Would you say that agrarian crime prevailed over the whole of Westmeath?—I think it does, over the whole of Westmeath.

2495. In your opinion, would the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act be as applicable in cases of agrarian or Ribbon crime, as it was in the case of the Fenian outrages?—I think that it would not be as applicable, because there are not such distinguishing marks of Ribbonism as there were of Fenianism. You cannot apply the remedy with the same degree of certainty to Ribbon and agrarian crimes as you could to Fenian crimes.

2496. But still your opinion is that sufficient evidence could be brought before the Executive to justify them in arresting certain persons?—I have within my own knowledge certain cases which appear to be ample to justify the Executive in acting upon the evidence that might be afforded them. I know of cases which could leave scarcely a doubt upon the mind of any man, of certain persons whom there is not sufficient evidence to convict upon trial, having been implicated in these agrarian cases.

2497. Are you of opinion that the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act would have any more than a temporary effect?—I think that anything which has the effect of making a lull in crime at the present day, would have a highly beneficial effect in the future; because, in fact, there is no ground for the present combinations; they have nothing to complain of. Formerly, questions between landlord and tenant gave rise to agrarian outrage; but now, if the Ribbon combinations waited for cases between landlord and tenant they might, if I may use the term, give up business, as they are so very few in number. The consequence, is that almost all the recent cases can scarcely be called agrarian at all. The Ribbonmen prescribe rules for people in reference to what stewards they are to keep, and whom they are to part with, and with reference to what acts they are to do in the ordinary discharge of their social duties, and they visit them with punishment unless those acts are in accordance with their ideas.

2498. Do you think that the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act would enable evidence to be obtained, and consequently, convictions?—I think that it would induce the lower classes to feel

feel that the law was strengthened for their protection, and I think it probable that it would give courage to them to come forward, which they have not at present.

2499. Probably nothing will finally destroy the organisation except obtaining a few convictions; is that your opinion?—I think that that is the only means for destroying the organisation.

2500. Mr. *Disraeli.*] Will you state how long you have been Crown Solicitor for the county of Westmeath?—For upwards of 25 years.

2501. Is it your opinion that crimes of violence, including threatening letters under that title, have increased during the two last years in that county?—I think they have; threatening letters, particularly, have very largely increased.

2502. It is your opinion that the Peace Preservation Act is not an instrument sufficient to cope with those serious crimes?—I think it is not.

2503. And you are of opinion that most coercive measures are necessary to obtain that result?—I am.

2504. Have you expressed that opinion to persons in authority?—I have.

2505. To whom?—To the Attorney General.

2506. And to others probably?—To others probably; probably to the Solicitor General for Ireland.

2507. You have no doubt that the Government of Ireland is perfectly acquainted with your opinions upon that subject?—I have no doubt that they are. I have no doubt that the Government of Ireland have used the greatest efforts, which the law, as it stands at present, enables them to use to suppress crime.

2508. But you have expressed your opinion that most coercive measures are necessary for that purpose?—Yes, most coercive.

2509. And alone would be sufficient?—And alone would be sufficient.

2510. Mr. *Bruen.*] In cases of compensation for murder, you say that the grand jury has the power of fixing the area in which the compensation shall be laid?—It has.

2511. Is it not the case that the grand jury have had the power of fixing the area over which compensation shall be levied for malicious injuries to property, such as incendiary fires, and so on?—Yes, they have for a great many years.

2512. Have you ever heard that they exercised that power in a way that has given rise to dissatisfaction; that is to say, have their decisions been generally acquiesced in by the public?—I think that people who have to pay are always dissatisfied more or less; they would be always glad if the area was so arranged as to diminish their payment.

2513. But am I to understand from your answer, that the way in which the grand jury have exercised their power with reference to incendiary fires has not been unsatisfactory to the public?—I never heard that it had been unsatisfactory to the public. I may say that the questions with regard to the presentments to which I have been referring were raised before the grand jury and before the judges; and although the grand jury were quite unanimous in deciding upon the amount of compensation, differences of opinion arose with reference to the area. People do not like taxing themselves if they see any reason to prevent it.

2514. With regard to the change of venue, the difficulty of obtaining evidence, you state, is the principal reason of the failure of justice?—By far the principal reason.

2515. That difficulty arises from the intimidation to which the witnesses are subject, or believe they will be subject?—To which they know they will be subject.

2516. How would change of venue give security from that intimidation?—I do not think it would give much security; the only security it would give would be that the witnesses would feel more security in giving evidence in a country other than that in which these combinations existed, but I do not attach much importance to that alteration. I am sure that terrorism would be carried on, and I am sure that even in the case of change of venue fear would exist to a large extent even in the place to which the venue was changed.

2517. Suppose the case of an outrage occurring in Westmeath, and the venue being changed to Dublin, the witnesses would be people probably from Westmeath who would come and give their evidence in Dublin; would not that evidence be perfectly well known to the people of Westmeath?—It would be perfectly well known.

2518. So that when they returned to Westmeath they would be subjected to intimidation?—I think the change of venue is rather for the benefit of the jury than for the benefit of the witnesses.

2519. You do not think it would have any decided effect?—No very decided effect.

2520. Mr. *Downing.*] Is not the law at present under the Peace Preservation Act, that the Attorney General can determine that there shall be change of venue, and the judge, upon his application, may determine the county in which the trial shall be held?—No; the section says, "Where any indictment found in any county specially proclaimed, shall be removed by *certiorari* into Her Majesty's Court of Queen's Bench at Dublin, and issue shall be joined on such indictment, the said Court, in term time or in the vacation, shall, upon the application of Her Majesty's Attorney General for Ireland in that behalf, order a suggestion to be entered upon the record directing such issue to be tried in such county as the Court shall name." In order to do that there must first of all be an indictment presented at the assizes, and then there must be a postponement of the trial in order to give time for the application to the Court of Queen's Bench to enter the suggestion upon the record, that there should be a change of venue to another county.

2521. Is not the Attorney General, by merely putting the question, enabled to determine the name after the indictment has been found?—Not till after the indictment has been found, and then the change must be made upon application to the Court of Queen's Bench.

2522. I think you stated to the Committee that one prisoner had the right of 20 peremptory challenges, and that two prisoners tried together had the right of 40 peremptory challenges; have you not the power of preventing that by joining the trials?—Not any power whatever; if you put the prisoners on trial separately, you may, to a great extent, defeat the objects of the prosecution. This time twelvemonths there was a case in the King's County, which attracted great attention; it was a case of great importance. Two persons were put on trial, and the Crown Counsel were

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were desirous of putting them on trial for felony. I thought the proper thing to do was to put them on trial for misdemeanour, but they feared that it might be frittering down the importance of the case, and they decided on trying the case as one of felony. When we came into court the next morning, we asked if they would join in their challenges, and they refused to do so, and we found on looking into the question that justice might be defeated if we did not put them on their trial for misdemeanour; so we did.

2523. Have you had occasion to find fault with the verdicts of the common juries at the last assizes for Westmeath?—I thought that in the cases where they differed, the jurors who were for an acquittal were wrong.

2524. You are the Crown prosecutor, you know, and there is a natural desire upon the part of officials to succeed, is there not?—I think not, except in the interests of justice. In Crown cases our instructions and our duties are to act with as perfect fairness towards the prisoner as to the Crown; there is nothing in which our instructions are more strict than in injunctions of that kind.

2525. Did you prosecute in Supple's case?—Yes, I did.

2526. Is that the case to which you allude?—I did not allude to that, because there was an acquittal in the case.

2527. I ask you about that, because the Committee have had some evidence about it. From your great experience as a professional man, would not you say that it was a fair case for the jury to acquit the prisoner; were not there sufficient doubts to justify the jury in acquitting him?—I do not find much fault with that acquittal. I thought that as between the identification of the constable and the alibi of the accused, there were grounds upon which a jury might form an opinion.

2528. And other points, such as the contradiction of the evidence by Supple himself?—No, I do not think that that was the point.

2529. You stated that formerly the great cause of crime was in connection with land; do you know of any case except that of the man Dowling that did not arise from connection with land?—I know more cases latterly that did not arise from cases connected with land than did.

2530. Waters' was one of those cases?—No, Waters was a process server, and he served an ejectment upon Duffy, a farmer, who is known in Westmeath by the name of Captain Duffy. I suppose that was an index of the position he held in the county, and I have no doubt that because of his performing that duty he was murdered.

2531. In that case there was a compensation of 325 *l.* given to his mother, was there not?—Yes, there was.

2532. What was her age?—She was a woman aged 48, and he was a man aged 26.

2533. Have you had any experience in King's County of presentments?—I stood in this relation to the King's County presentments. The presentments were brought forward by persons who had been injured, and not by the representatives of persons who had been murdered, and I was desired by Government to give every assistance in those cases. The cases were, in my absence at the Westmeath Assizes, dealt with by the grand jury. There were appeals to the judge, and I gave briefs to the counsel to appear in those cases, and I acted before the judge in these cases.

2534. Do you know of any case in which the grand jury took upon themselves to give twice the amount that was claimed?—Yes, that was one of the cases to which I referred. A man of the name of Fox applied for 150 *l.*, and the grand jury thought that was too little, and gave him 300 *l.*, but the judge afterwards reduced it to 150 *l.*, that being the sum named in Fox's notices.

2535. Were you at all interested in a presentment on account of a burning which took place in your county?—I was not.

2536. Did I understand you to say that you were present in the grand jury room when Ryan was examined?—No, I was not present in the grand jury room when the witness was examined. I was present when one question was asked by the grand jury.

2537. Do you know anything of the effect of the police tax?—I do.

2538. Do you think that the results of that tax are equally beneficial with those of presentments for injury?—Quite as beneficial; and that tax has one result which the presentment I have been referring to has not, which is, that the Government there have unlimited power to fix the area.

2539. And you think that that is beneficial?—I do.

2540. You appear, in that respect, to differ from all the witnesses who have been examined here?—I am not aware what opinions the witnesses before me have expressed, but I think that the Government should have the power to fix the area.

2541. Viscount *Sandon.*] I understand you to say that your opinion is that these outrages are no longer purely agrarian?—They are no longer purely agrarian.

2542. And you also say that the Ribbonmen could hardly be called political now in the same sense as the Fenians were political?—They are not.

2543. Therefore, we may say that they are socialists?—Yes, to a certain extent.

2544. Are you aware of any other relations in life besides between landlord and tenant in which Ribbonism now interferes?—Cases of the employment of herds and stewards, and holding land from which other persons were evicted, which may to a certain extent be deemed agrarian, but the most extraordinary claims have been brought forward by persons to lands of which others have been in possession for from 15 to 20 years, and to carry out the objects of the claimants agrarian violence or Ribbon violence is resorted to.

2545. But does it affect the relations of trade at all?—I am not aware that it affects the relations of trade.

2546. Am I to understand that, as you believe the causes are now removed, Ribbonism would die out shortly if it were rigorously dealt with now?—I think that since the enactment of the remedial statutes, which I am sure ultimately will have a great effect in removing crime, Ribbonism has been upon the increase. I am sure that terrorism is much greater at present than I have ever known it in the county of Westmeath.

2547. To what do you attribute that?—To the existence of these combinations, who feel that they have this power, and exercise it, and to the applications made to them by persons who have private objects to carry out, and to the carrying

out of those powers for the private objects of such persons.

2548. But why do you think that crime has increased since this remedial legislation was passed?—Perhaps, having very little agrarian crime to contend with, they have turned themselves to objects of a different kind. Why it increases I cannot tell, but we have the fact beyond question that terrorism is greater than ever it was.

2549. But you cannot account for the increase of terrorism?—It is not easy to account for the increase of it, but very considerable panic prevails amongst all classes in Westmeath who are on the side of law and order.

2550. Mr. *Plunket*.] Do you see any reason to suppose that if no further measures are granted to the Executive, of a repressive kind, this state of terrorism will cease?—I am not aware of any reason why it should cease, unless there are some repressive measures taken.

2551. Mr. *James*.] You suggested that the Attorney General should have the power to change the venue upon his own motion; would you leave it to him to fix the county in which the trial should take place?—I would leave it to the Attorney General, with power to the prisoner to apply to the Court to alter the venue to some other county, the expenses of the application, if successful, to be paid by the Crown.

2552. Those prisoners, being some of them poor men, could not afford the expense of the motion; would it not meet your views that the Attorney General should fix the county rather than the Court?—The mode in which it is done is unimportant.

2553. You suggested that the Attorney General should have the power of changing the venue; and in case of a question as to what county the venue should be changed to, it may be that it would be desirable to give the Crown a general power to remove the prisoner's trial to a county where they would be certain to obtain a verdict; would it not meet your views that, while the Attorney General should change the venue, the Court should nominate the county in which the trial should take place?—I would rather not attach to the case the importance of an application to the Court of Queen's Bench in the first instance at all. I think that it would be quite safe in the hands of the Irish Executive, leaving it afterwards to the accused to apply to change the venue; and if he succeeded, to be indemnified by the Crown from all expense connected with that application.

2554. Of course you are aware that in former periods there has been a great amount of agrarian crime in Roscommon and other parts of Ireland, particularly about the year 1848?—Yes.

2555. Was the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act then suggested, or is this a new suggestion?—I do not think that the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act was then ever suggested in those cases.

2556. Do you know from whom the suggestion has proceeded to suspend the Habeas Corpus Act in this case?—I cannot tell from whom it proceeded, but I know that almost all persons who are on the side of the law in the county Westmeath, are of opinion that it ought to be suspended.

2557. Do you think that the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act would be received as a fair alteration of the law in other parts of Ireland, if it is to be only dependent upon the report of Crown officials like yourself?—I do not think that anything of that kind should be dependent upon Crown officials, but that it should be to a great extent governed by the public opinion of the district in which those crimes prevail.

2558. I presume that your reports to the Attorney and the Solicitor General were verbal reports?—I have given in written reports.

2559. They were not to be made public, I presume; they were confidential reports, were they not?—All those reports were confidential, but the Government are not restricted in making any use of them they think fit.

2560. Applying the question to Irish people generally, do you think it advisable that the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act should be applied for the first time to Ireland without its being known what those reports were?—I think that the facts of the case are very much more material than my reports. The question whether those restrictive measures should be adopted would entirely depend upon the state of the county and the necessity for repressive legislation. I think that the reports which you refer to form but a very small element in the consideration.

2561. You speak now as a Crown official giving information to the Crown, but is that the opinion generally in Ireland?—I am not now speaking as an official, but as a witness endeavouring to give my opinion as impartially as I can. I think that in Ireland all persons who prize the law are desirous for nothing so much as that outrages of this description should be put down by every possible means consistent with justice.

2562. And of course it is a matter of opinion amongst those persons what is consistent with justice?—What I mean by justice is, not doing injustice to any individual.

2563. Mr. Serjeant *Sherlock*.] Have you considered whether it would not be reasonable in the event of changing the venue, to make some provision for the increased expenses of the prisoner, who is generally a person in humble life?—Undoubtedly, I think that that ought to be done; the prisoner ought to be indemnified from all pecuniary loss consequent upon any such change.

2564. As a general rule, do you think that the state of King's County is very peaceable ordinarily?—Very much so, except in the district bordering on Westmeath.

2565. That is a very limited district, is it not?—Not very limited; it embraces, I think, the whole of the Barony of Kilcoursey.

2566. Could you tell the Committee in regard to the other outrages to which you alluded, what distance from the borders of Westmeath they occurred?—Probably varying from five to eight Irish miles.

2567. Was that about the distance in Fox's case?—Fox's case was nearer.

2568. Was Fox's case more than two miles off?—I think it was.

2569. Do you know the distance of Raharney?—Fox's case was within about two miles of Clara; Moran's case was in the same district.

2570. How far was Moran's case from the border?—I am not quite accurate about that; I was pointed out the locality, but I did not take note of the relative distances.

2571. Probably you do not know accurately the borders of the county?—Yes, I do.

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2572. Do you know Tubber?—That is in King's County.

2573. Is it not exactly upon the borders?—Yes, it is.

2574. Did not that take place within half a mile of Tubber?—It may be so; I did not take a note of the distances; they would vary from two to four or five miles.

2575. Is not that the calendar of the prisoners for the last assizes at King's County (*handing the same to the Witness*)?—Yes, that is the calendar.

2576. That shows the general state of the county to be very peaceable, does it not?—No; I think it shows an extremely bad state of the county.

2577. How many prisoners are there down in that calendar?—There is only one prisoner.

2578. How does that show a bad state of the county?—Because it shows that no evidence is forthcoming against the persons charged with these serious outrages in some districts.

2579. *Chairman.*] Do you know how many cases were reported by the constabulary?—A great many cases; I might remark that the two cases of Fox and Moran, which the honourable Member for the King's County has been alluding to, occurred not very far from the town of Tullamore, and a variety of other cases.

2580. Mr. Serjeant *Sherlock.*] Will you inform the Committee what the other cases were that you can remember?—There was Callaghan's case in Clara; when Mr. Cox took up his residence there, he appointed a bailiff, and the next morning after the bailiff was appointed, he was served with two threatening letters of the worst description.

2581. The prisoners under former rules appeared to amount to 22?—Those are probably from the quarter sessions.

2582. Or from the courts of petty sessions?—Yes. The Committee will allow me to say that, with reference to the crimes that are tried at quarter sessions, there is not the least difficulty in getting evidence about them; they are generally of a social character.

2583. Mr. *Maguire.*] But in the other parts of Ireland, the absence of prisoners from the calendars is an indication of the peaceable character of the district, is it not?—In peaceable counties where agrarian or Ribbon crime does not exist, the absence of prisoners from the calendar is a very good sign.

2584. As a general rule, the absence of prisoners from the calendars is a good sign?—Yes.

2585. You spoke of the advantage of having a lull in crime; is there not a lull in crime in Westmeath at the present moment?—Yes, as far as I can ascertain; but I have heard of some cases of threatening letters.

2586. Did you see the Irish correspondence in the "Times" this morning?—I did see something of it.

2587. According to that, there is not only a lull, but an absence of crime at the present moment, is there not?—I may be wrong, but I attribute that lull, to a great extent, to the appointment of this Committee. I have been informed, that while this Committee has been sitting, a good many suspicious individuals have disappeared from Westmeath.

2588. The operation of the Land Act upon public sentiment as far as you know, has been beneficial up to the present time?—I think so very.

2589. Do you think it has had time to exercise its full influence upon the public mind?—I think it has not.

2590. Do you not think that after a short time the laws governing property, according to that Act, will be more clearly defined and understood by the people, and give a more general feeling of confidence in the law?—I have the greatest hope that it will lay the foundation of peace in Ireland.

2591. You hear of these extravagant ideas in the minds of some people, imagining that the land which they had 20 years ago they can easily re-obtain; could you account for these demands, to a certain extent, upon the supposition that there has been a good deal of disturbance in the public mind, owing to the consideration of such a large measure as the land question, by which men have been obliged to go back, to a certain extent, to first principles, so that their minds have been disturbed by the very discussion of this Act?—No, I do not think the claims have arisen from the Act in that way.

2592. Do you think that when the Act is thoroughly understood in the sense of its protective results to industry and capital, it will work beneficially to the interests of the country?—I think that it will if it be properly administered.

2593. You have no reason to apprehend that it will not be properly administered?—I do not know; I should not like to offer an opinion upon that.

2594. Do you mean that in a legal or in a social sense?—In a legal sense.

2595. You are not afraid of any miscarriage of justice on the part of any of the legal tribunals, are you?—Very extravagant demands have been made, which I hope will be moderated according to justice.

2596. You have always an ultimate appeal to the highest tribunals, have you not?—Yes.

2597. I should like to ask you what is the condition of the peasantry and the labouring class generally in the county of Westmeath?—The labouring class in the county of Westmeath appear to me to be better off than in most of the other counties in Ireland.

2598. What are the average wages for agricultural labourers in Westmeath?—Generally speaking they average from 6 *s.* to 8 *s.* a week, and then they usually have some allowances beyond that.

2599. Do you refer to labourers employed by farmers or by gentlemen for their demesnes?—I refer to both; but I am not so well acquainted with that subject as regards Westmeath as in King's County. I am intimately acquainted with all those details in King's County, but not so much so in Westmeath.

2600. Are the agricultural labourers well off in Meath, as a rule?—I have very little knowledge of Meath, except as a great grazing county.

2601. Are any of those large grazing farmers of recent, or are they of remote, origin?—They are of remote origin; as well as I can remember they have been there for a very long time.

2602. Colonel *Wilson Patten.*] Do I understand you to say that the extra police force which has been placed upon these disturbed districts, has

has had the effect of checking crime?—I could not say, but I think that it is very well calculated to suppress crime, because I know how much the pinch has been felt in those districts, and it seems to me to be obvious that if the people in the districts feel a pecuniary pressure from the existence of crime, they will set themselves to work more anxiously than they have been in the habit of doing to prevent it.

2603. In your experience has that been the effect of this extra police force?—I could not really answer that question. Particular areas are fixed on for the levying of the police tax, but I have not now sufficient knowledge to say whether in those particular districts, which are sometimes extremely narrow, crime has been diminished.

2604. The *Solicitor General for Ireland.*] You stated that you had been for 25 years Crown Solicitor for Westmeath and King's County?—Yes, I have.

2605. Did you succeed Mr. Seed?—My appointment bore the same date as Mr. Seed's.

2606. That was under Lord De Grey's Government, was it not?—Yes; Mr. Seed and I were appointed at the same time, but he had been for a very long time before that conducting the business of the whole circuit, while Mr. Geale was Crown Solicitor for it, and then, for a year after the death of Mr. Geale, he held the office *ad interim.*

2607. And then you were appointed to the office that you at present hold?—I was.

2608. You live, I believe, in King's County?—My place is in King's County, and I spend a good deal of my time there.

2609. It is the fact, as I gather from your evidence, that the Ribbon conspiracy extends over the whole of Westmeath, and into that part of King's County which adjoins Westmeath?—I believe it does.

2610. Do you think that the part of King's County adjoining Westmeath is quite as bad as Westmeath?—I do not think it is quite as bad. I do not think that the difficulty of getting evidence is so great.

2611. Taking Westmeath as the centre, I presume I may say it shades off into the other counties until it entirely ceases?—Not entirely ceases, but until it almost ceases.

2612. As regards the compensation clause in the Peace Preservation Act, you say that its provisions were never carried into effect until the last assizes; that there never was an opportunity of carrying them into effect?—I did not quite say that. The Act came into effect, if I remember rightly, in May last, and I recollect one case which occurred at the assizes in south Tipperary.

2613. But I am referring to your own district?—In my own district it did not arise until the last assizes.

2614. That was the first time that those provisions could be applied?—That was the first time that they could be applied.

2615. And they were applied in the cases you mentioned?—They were applied in the four cases I mentioned.

2616. With respect to the jury question, you say that if a trial is for misdemeanour, you may get a good jury?—Yes, that is so.

2617. Because in that case the prisoner has no power of challenge?—That is so.

2618. But, in a felony case, if the prisoner exercises his power of challenging the 20 jurymen, or if there be two prisoners together, and they exercise, as they may, the power of challenging 40 jurymen, that diminishes very much your power of getting a good jury, does it not?—It destroys it.

2619. You, I presume, exercise your power of ordering jurors to stand by on behalf of the Crown?—I do.

2620. I do not understand you to recommend that the law should be altered so as to deprive the prisoner altogether of his power of challenging jurors?—I really think that the power of challenging jurors is one which is generally only exercised by the prisoner for the purpose of getting sympathisers on a jury in agrarian cases.

2621. That is what I understand you to say, if the attorney sees a man who he thinks would be a good man low down upon the panel, he sets aside the others until he gets at him?—Yes, he has a double object in view.

2622. But of course a good man in the prisoner's point of view would not be a good man in your point of view?—That would be quite a different thing.

2623. With reference to the power of challenge, what change would you recommend?—My opinion always was that the number of challenges should be diminished.

2624. How many would you give the power to challenge?—I think the prisoner might challenge as many as he pleased for cause.

2625. That is to say, if he could prove by legal evidence that a certain juror was not a fit person to try him, he should be allowed to set him aside?—Challenge for cause is for any good cause.

2626. Have you known challenges for cause allowed?—No, not in that way; but I have known objections come from prisoners as to a particular juror, to the effect that he had formed certain opinions upon the subject, and that objection was always conceded.

2627. That is to say, that the Crown does not put the prisoner to formal evidence for proof, but would allow that juror to stand by?—Yes.

2628. Was that done during or before the challenges?—While the challenges were going on.

2629. That is to say, that the prisoner should not be obliged to challenge the person as one of his 20, but might challenge him for cause beyond the 20?—Yes, quite so.

2630. You are not in favour of the complete abolition of the power of challenge, are you?—I object to the power as it exists at present. I never saw injustice done to the prisoner by the want of peremptory challenges, and I may remark that the absence of challenges in cases of misdemeanour has given rise to a curious anomaly. In the White Boy Acts, under the 15th and 16th of George the Third, and the 27th of George the Third, there are certain offences made felonies which are punishable with seven years' penal servitude, and under the 1st and 2nd of William the Fourth there are certain offences made misdemeanours which are punishable with penal servitude for life. In the case of the felonies which are punishable with seven years' penal servitude, the prisoner would have the privilege of 20 challenges, whereas, in those cases under the Act of the 1st and 2nd of William the Fourth, in which the punishment is penal servitude for life, he has no power of challenge at all.

2631. Is the explanation of that difference this, that the Legislature declared that the one

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class of offences should be misdemeanours, and the other felonies?—Yes; the Legislature had, I suppose, that idea in its mind, that the one should be misdemeanours and the other felonies.

2632. Are there not a very large number of jurors on your jurors' book in Westmeath?—A very large number.

2633. Highly respectable men? — Highly respectable men.

2634. Men who would make good jurors, in every sense of the word?—Yes.

2635. Are there more than sufficient to constitute the panel at any one assizes?—Yes.

2636. How many men should you say there were upon the jurors' book for Westmeath?—I am told there are about 900.

2637. At all events there are more than 100 upon the panel at Westmeath?—Yes; there were 170 upon the last panel.

2638. Out of that number could not fully 100 good jurors be selected?—Yes, I think they could out of the jurors' book.

2639. Then if they are not selected, whose fault is that?—I presume it is the fault of the party who makes the selection.

2640. Who is that?—The precept is issued by the Clerk of the Peace to the barony cess collector.

2641. Now you are going back behind the jurors' book. I want to know who makes the selection out of the jurors' book?—The sub-sheriff.

2642. The sub-sheriff or under-sheriff is appointed by the sheriff, is he not?—Yes.

2643. And, generally speaking, the sheriff is appointed by the Crown out of a list of three selected by the judges?—Yes.

2644. And those three are generally handed in by the prior sheriff, are they not?—Yes.

2645. Consequently the sheriff is a public officer, not selected by the Crown?—That is so.

2646. Therefore, if there be a bad jury panel, the fault is not with the Crown or with the Crown solicitor, but with the sheriff?—Yes.

2647. There is an Act of Parliament allowing the sub-sheriff to be a permanent officer, is there not?—Yes, there is.

2648. The sub-sheriff is usually some attorney resident in the county, is he not?—In the present instance the sub-sheriff is not an attorney.

2649. But he is the sheriff's nominee?—Yes.

2650. And nobody has any control over him but the sheriff?—Nobody.

2651. He does the duty for the sheriff?—He does.

2652. Now, to go back to the jurors' book; is it not the fact that in each barony the barony cess collector returns a certain number of men to serve as jurors?—Yes.

2653. And those lists are revised at the special sessions at which the justices preside for the purpose?—Yes, they are, or at least they ought to to be, but very often they are not.

2654. Those lists when revised ought to be signed by the justice presiding, ought they not?—Yes, he signs them.

2655. And then they are handed by him to the Clerk of the Peace?—Yes, just so.

2656. And then the Clerk of the Peace makes out the jurors' book from them?—Yes.

2657. That is the jurors' book for the year?—That is the jurors' book for the year.

2658. In Westmeath it contains 900 names, you state?—About that.

2659. If you had a bad jury, at all events there are materials in the book for a good one?—Yes, there are materials in the book for a good one.

2660. The sub-sheriff is supposed to select those men according to his sound discretion out of the jurors' book, is he not?—Yes, I think so.

2661. But he may put whatever names out of the book he pleases upon the jurors' panel, may he not?—Yes; he may put them in alphabetically, or in any way he pleases.

2662. It is in that order that they stand upon the jurors' panel?—Yes.

2663. And it is in that order that they are challenged?—Yes.

2664. It very frequently happens that a jury of 12 is arrived at without going through the whole panel, does it not?—Yes.

2665. Did you ever hear of any case of Roman Catholics being put at the foot of the panel, with the view of keeping it steady, and the Protestants at the top, or *vice versâ*?—I have heard of such a thing, but I think that having regard to their social status, and not their religion, the Roman Catholics, who have a high social status, are quite as good jurors as the Protestants.

2666. I believe also that in ordering jurors to stand aside upon the part of the Crown, that is not equivalent to a challenge?—It is not a challenge.

2667. But a juror so called upon to stand aside, must go upon the jury if you cannot get a sufficient number of men without him?—Yes.

2668. In ordering him to stand aside, according to your instructions, you are only governed by a desire to obtain an impartial jury?—By that only.

2669. There are generally instructions given to order publicans to stand aside, are there not?—There are such instructions given. I may say with regard to the panel in Westmeath, that if it were not for the extensive confederacy which prevails there, it would not be a bad panel; but there are many farmers and persons of that class who are returned upon the panel, who, in the present state of things in Westmeath, I believe, are afraid to do their duty, but who would have in other respects sufficient means and position, and social standing, to be very good jurors.

2670. The jury panel is the same panel for both civil and criminal business, is it not, except for special jurors?—Yes.

2671. It is the same panel for juries in criminal cases and for common juries in civil cases?—It is a very curious panel in Westmeath in that respect. First of all, there is the grand jury, then there is a special panel of 48; but out of that special panel of 48 there are, I think, somewhere about 30 on what is called the long panel; that is a panel for the trial of criminal cases.

2672. But it is the fact, is it not, that special jurors require to have a peculiar qualification under the Act of Parliament; a higher qualification?—They do.

2673. What is the qualification of a special juror?—I am not quite certain; I think it is 50*l.*

2674. Or the possession of a certain amount of money; several thousand pounds?—I believe so, or the younger son of a peer or a magistrate.

2675. Is it not the fact that no special juror can try a criminal case as such; you cannot have a special jury in criminal cases?—No, but you can have special jurors.

2676. That

2676. That is because they are upon the long panel?—Yes.

2677. But you cannot have a jury which is confined to special jurors?—No, you cannot strike a special jury in criminal cases.

2678. What is the qualification for common jurors?—I think it is fixed under the 3 & 4 Will. 4, at 10 *l.* freehold, and 15 *l.* leasehold. I am not quite sure, but I think that is so.

2679. Now, leaving the question of the jury for a moment, I think you stated that there was greater difficulty in detecting Ribbonism than in detecting Fenianism?—What I said was that the means of knowing who was a Fenian and who was not, were more facile than the means of knowing who was a Ribbonman and who was not.

2680. Was it not the fact that Fenianism was a more open conspiracy; that people more openly avowed themselves to be Fenians?—Yes, undoubtedly they did.

2681. And it was, therefore, easier to take up Fenians than Ribbonmen as such?—Yes, that is what I mean to convey. I think that if the Habeas Corpus Act was suspended its operations would be very much more limited in Ribbon cases than it was in cases of Fenianism, the numbers who would be made amenable under it would be very few.

2682. That is to say those to whom it would be possible to apply it?—No, I mean the cases in which there was sufficient evidence to bring the parties up on. I think those cases would be very few.

2683. Is that because there are fewer cases of Ribbonism than there were of Fenianism?—No; the cases are very numerous, but it is because the leaders of them are not so easily known.

2684. You were acquainted with Supple's case which has been mentioned to the Committee, and which has also been called Bray's case, from the name of the prisoner?—I am.

2685. Do you think that in that case the grounds for the acquittal of the prisoner were reasonable; you would not say that it was owing to the perversity of the jury?—No, I would not.

2686. Will you just take that document in your hand (*handing a Paper to the Witness*). That is the original of the oath which was asked for the other day, which was found in the public-house in Mullingar; are you aware of that?—I could not recollect the exact particulars, but I know that there was a document found in the public-house of a particular individual in Mullingar.

2687. Whose license was afterwards withdrawn?—Whose license was afterwards withdrawn.

2688. And that was a case in which the police came in and found that document lying on the table?—They did.

2689. You had charge of that case in your position as Crown solicitor, had you not?—I had.

2690. In your judgment, was there sufficient evidence in that case to put those men upon their trial?—There was only one man in my recollection who was made amenable, but there was not sufficient evidence to put him on his trial. I think the room in which this document was found was a tap-room to which many people had access. When the police came in all the parties rose up and left, and that document was found left upon the table; the public, however, had access to this room, and it was impossible to say whether any of the individuals who were found in that room were persons identified with this document or not.

2691. Will you read the paper?—"Obligation of a Ribbonman." The person is first asked by the captain or committee-man, "Is it your wish, with all your heart and mind, to resume the heavenly test of a Ribbonman, or any other title you may get from the Board." The person answers, "Yes." The captain of the committee then says, "Take the book in your right hand, and go down on your bare knees. You swear that you will never prosecute a Ribbonman, or any other title he may get from the Ribbon Board, before judge or jury, or any other man, that can hurt our system." The person is then again told if it is not his wish to receive the chief secrets he may rise and go away; but if he answers "Yes," the captain then orders him to bless himself, and to take the book in his right hand, and he is sworn as follows: "By virtue of the oath I have taken, during my existence, I will aid and assist with all my might and strength, when called upon, to massacre Protestants, cut away heretics, burn British churches, dethrone Protestant kings and princes, and all others, except the members of the Church of Rome and this system; and by virtue of the oath I have taken, I will think it no sin to kill and massacre a Protestant whenever opportunity serves; and by virtue of the said oath, if I know any of the members of this system to be backward in executing any of the aforesaid orders, I will immediately make it known to the captain or to some committee-man belonging to the Ribbon Board. And by virtue of the oath I always will attend, at one minute's warning, to execute any commands belonging to the system; and that I will never see a brother hurt or abused by any not up to this system without assisting him; nor will I buy anything from a Protestant at any time if I can get it from a brother. And I also feel bound to believe that there is no absolution to be had from the Pope of Rome, or any other authority belonging to that church, for any part of this solemn test, or any forgiveness in this world, or that which is to come, for a breach of this test."

2692. Mr. *Chichester Fortescue.*] I understand you to draw a marked distinction between the state of this district, into which we are now inquiring, and that of the rest of Ireland in regard to agrarian crime?—I think that Ireland generally, except in this district and some others, is in a very healthful state in regard to the absence of crime.

2693. I mean that, comparing it with the state of other parts of Ireland with which you are acquainted, in respect of the absence of agrarian crime, its condition has very much improved since this time last year?—I think there has been an improvement since this time last year.

2694. But in this particular district you have not perceived an improvement, and you believe that that improvement has not taken place?—No, I think that it has grown worse.

2695. You do not mean, probably, that the actual number of agrarian crimes, including threatening letters, is greater now than it was then, do you?—I mean that it is greater. I think that the constabulary returns of crime and outrage during last year are greater than in those of antecedent years.

2696. You have known this district for many years?—Since I have been acting as Crown solicitor; that is upwards of 25 years.

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2697. Should you say that Ribbonism has been deeply rooted in this district for many years past?—Very much so.

2698. Would you say that the crime of this district is one more difficult to deal with and eradicate than crime in most other parts of Ireland?—I think that nothing can exceed the difficulty of dealing with crime in the county of Westmeath.

2699. You would not be surprised to find that measures which had succeeded to a considerable extent in other districts might fail in their operation in this district?—I should not be surprised at it. I think that it would require most stringent measures for its repression.

2700. And that you believe has been the case?—There is no improvement in Westmeath. I am quite sure that whatever may have occurred elsewhere, to use the words of the Chief Justice, things are going from bad to worse in Westmeath.

2701. Would you say, that from the nature of agrarian crime in Westmeath, and its long established character and organised condition, it would be one of the last districts in Ireland which would be reached, as it were, by any general measure that might be adopted?—I think that it would be more difficult to eradicate it there, than it would be in any other part of Ireland.

2702. And, therefore, although in your evidence you have attached very considerable value to the provisions of the Peace Preservation Act of last year, with respect to its general operation, you tell us that it has not succeeded in coping with crime in this particular district?—It has not in any way diminished crime, or the combinations from which crime emanates.

2703. And for the purpose of eradicating crime in this district, you see nothing beyond the Act of last year which you think would be efficient for the purpose, except the enabling the Lord Lieutenant to arrest by his warrant without trial?—That is a very difficult question to answer. It may, perhaps, be said that the jurisdiction of the magistrates under the 26th section of the Peace Preservation Act of last Session might be usefully enlarged.

2704. In what sense enlarged?—By making that section applicable, with the assent of the Irish Executive, to agrarian crimes which were not of an aggravated character. I mean, giving the magistrates enlarged jurisdiction with regard to those crimes, subject to such regulations as the Irish Executive might perhaps make. It is a subject upon which I do not wish to offer any decided opinion, for it is one of great difficulty, as it would involve enlarging so very much the jurisdiction of the magistrates.

2705. You think that that would provide some means of punishing these crimes?—I think that it is a subject which is worthy of consideration for this reason; I have already mentioned three cases which occurred at the last assizes at Westmeath, in which witnesses who had sworn informations, departed from those informations at the assizes. If there had been any mode of adjudicating upon those cases immediately, the great probability is that there would have been convictions, and therefore it is that I think, subject to such safeguards as the executive may point out, that there is a possibility of enlarging the jurisdiction given by the 26th section, so as to make it applicable to certain cases of an agrarian character, which are not attended with aggravated circumstances.

2706. And you think that would be useful?—It is a subject of so much importance, that I do not like offering a very decided opinion upon it, because it would look somewhat like going back again to the days of the Insurrection Acts; but I think that it is very well worthy of consideration

2707. *Chairman.*] Can you remember how long you have formed the opinion that nothing would amend this state of things except the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act?—It is an opinion which I think I have formed only for some months, because my own feelings would be opposed to exceptional legislation, but it has been quite confirmed by the experience of the last assizes.

2708. Had you formed it at the time of the passing of the Peace Preservation Act of last year?—I cannot say that I had.

2709. You do not think that in any of the reports which you have been asked about which you addressed to the Attorney General or other officers of the Crown, you had recommended it earlier than a few months ago?—I am not very sure that I have recommended any particular thing to the law officers. I have written letters to them.

2710. The *Solicitor General for Ireland.*] You never did so to me?—No, I think not.

2711. *Chairman.*] You mentioned also the Attorney General; did you suggest it to him?—No, I think not. I think in conversation I represented in the strongest terms that I could the condition of the county of Westmeath, and the necessity for restrictive legislation; but I think it is very likely that I never said that the Habeas Corpus Act should be suspended. I have written letters, which I believe are in the hands of the Executive, and which I think state my opinions upon the subject.

2712. In those letters I understand you rather to describe the state of the county than to have recommended any special remedy?—Yes, I considered it was rather my duty to leave to the Attorney General and Solicitor General questions of that kind, confining myself to the facts on which I thought any legislation might be founded.

[The Witness withdrew.

The Right Rev. Dr. THOMAS NULTY, called in; and Examined.

Rt. Rev. Dr. *T. Nulty.*

2713. Mr. *Downing.*] You are a Roman Catholic Bishop?—I am.

2714. Will you state to the Committee what is your diocese?—The diocese of Meath. It comprises two whole counties, the county of Meath and the county of Westmeath, a great portion of the King's County, and also small portions of Cavan and Longford.

2715. How long have you been consecrated bishop?—I was consecrated on the 23rd of October 1864.

2716. Had you been previously in the diocese for a considerable time as a missionary priest?—Yes, I have been in the diocese since 1847, I think.

2717. Were you during any considerable portion

portion of that time connected with any public establishments as chaplain?—Yes, I was chaplain to two gaols for a considerable portion of that time.

2718. For what period?—I am not exactly sure how long it was, but I should think it was nearly 12 or 14 years.

2719. You have been brought in contact with the people generally, not only as priest, but you have also been brought into contact with persons confined in gaol for crime?—Yes, I have had a great deal of experience of prison life and prisoners in the gaols of Trim and Mullingar. I have been chaplain in both of those gaols.

2720. I think you reside in Meath and also in Westmeath?—Yes.

2721. What town do you reside in in Meath?—In Navan.

2722. And in Westmeath?—Mullingar.

2723. You are of course well acquainted with the state of Westmeath during the whole of the time you have mentioned to the Committee?—I should think so.

2724. There have been in Meath a good many outrages within the last two years?—Yes, I suppose so. I am not particularly acquainted with them, but I heard there were.

2725. I asked you with regard to Meath, but I wanted to ask you with respect to Westmeath; do you know that there has been considerable agrarian crime in that county lately?—Yes, but I think not more than in former years, nor perhaps so much.

2726. You are of opinion that agrarian crime is not so extensive now, nor has it been for the last year or two as it was formerly within your recollection?—I do not know that it is. I should think that it is not so considerable as it was in former years, judging from the outrages which have come to my knowledge, and I think I know them all.

2727. You have the means of acquiring information of a very extensive character, have you not?—I suppose so, principally through my priests. I am not in direct contact with the people at any parts of the diocese, with the exception of the two towns in which I reside. There I perform the duties of missionary priest while I am there, but I am not long in either place. I am generally going through the diocese.

2728. Have you formed an opinion with regard to the fact of there being at this moment a Ribbon confederacy in Westmeath or not?—Yes, I have formed an opinion upon that subject.

2729. Will you be good enough to state to the Committee what that opinion is?—Speaking from what I remember of the existence of such confederacies in former times, I may say that I do not think that there is at present in Westmeath a regular organised confederacy, having pass-words, being bound by an oath, and acknowledging a common executive authority, or a common authority of any kind; such a confederacy did exist formerly, in my early days, but I do not believe that such a confederacy exists at present.

2730. Have you come to that opinion after acquiring information, and consulting those who are capable of giving you information?—Yes.

2731. Throughout the whole of the county?—Yes; I have consulted my priests, all the priests of the disturbed districts, and I found that it was the opinion of about two-thirds of them that no such confederacy existed at all, and that there was about one-third who believed that such a confederacy existed, but they had no positive or direct knowledge of it, and only argued its existence from circumstances; and I believe that, considering the opportunities which the priests have of knowing everthing that goes on in the county, it is scarcely possible that they would not have direct and positive knowledge of such a confederacy if it existed.

2732. Will you allow me to ask you whether, during the whole of the time you have been Bishop of the diocese, you have not done all that was in your power to put an end to this confederacy?—Yes; that is my duty.

2733. Will you be good enough to state to the Committee the means which you have adopted from year to year to do so?—It is a recognised duty with all priests and bishops to do everything in their power to put a stop to these illegal societies, and no priest has power to give absolution to any penitent until he quits his connection with such a society; it is quite useless for him to come to confession, which everybody is bound to do; any priest or bishop would fail in his duty if he did not use all reasonable exertions to put down such a confederacy in his parish or diocese if he knew that it existed there; and I have myself, on very many occasions, warned my flock against such confederacies, especially in late times, since some of these outrages have been committed near the places where I live. I have, on several occasions, from the pulpit, warned and cautioned my people against these confederacies, and exhibited to them the madness, wickedness, and folly of these combinations, as well as I was able; and I expected every priest to do the same, and if I understood that any priest failed in that duty, I should feel it my duty to reprimand him.

2734. You have frequently spoken from the pulpit on the subject?—Yes. I remember upon one occasion not long ago, after the murder of Waters, that I preached particularly one Sunday upon that subject, and I was thanked for doing so by some Protestant gentlemen who heard of it some time afterwards; but it is a common and ordinary thing with me when I hear of any fresh outrage occurring to speak in the strongest terms of reprobation of these outrages.

2735. You published a pastoral letter in this present year, in which you refer at considerable length to these conspiracies?—Yes; but I did not expect that that pastoral letter would get the publicity which it has got. I never sent it to any newspaper or got it published; I intended it solely for my own people. I thought possibly it might be seen by some persons in authority, but I did not intend it for that purpose; I intended it, as I say, exclusively for my own people. I thought that it would be like every other pastoral letter that I have written, confined to my own people, and that nobody would take any notice of it.

2736. In that pastoral you alluded to evictions having occurred in the counties of Meath and Westmeath?—I did.

2737. Are you prepared, if asked by the Committee, to give the circumstances of those evictions which you alluded to?—Yes, but I cannot state anything from personal knowledge about those evictions, except about one of which I was an eye-witness, and which is described in the opening of the

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the pastoral; but I have enquired of the priests, and I have told them not to report anything but what they believed honestly and conscientiously to be true. Returns have been made to me of these evictions by the different priests, and I have made an abstract of those evictions, and if the Committee wish to hear anything about them I shall be happy to give them what information I possess.

2738. You have no doubt in your mind that those returns made to you are perfectly correct?—No doubt whatever; I could not prove them juridically, but I think that those witnesses have established all the certainty which is reasonable in affairs of that kind.

2739. Have some of those evictions come down to a recent period?—There have not been many evictions recently.

2740. What do you call recently?—Anything which happened in the last four or five years I should call recently.

2741. Were there evictions in 1867?—Yes; I have been informed by credible witnesses that there were.

2742. Mr. *Downing.*] Will you inform the Committee what was the diminution of population in Westmeath from 1851 to 1861?—Do you mean by the Census returns.

2743. Yes?—I have not taken it in that way, but I took the diminution from Thom's Directory.

2744. You say in your report, that it was 51,000 from 1851 to 1861?—Yes, in the portion of the diocese comprised in the counties of Meath and Westmeath.

2745. That includes the county of Meath?—Yes; whatever the statement is, I took it out of Thom's Directory.

2746. Mr. *Russell Gurney.*] Is that in Westmeath, or in the diocese?—In Westmeath and Meath; there are only two whole counties in the diocese.

2747. Mr. *Downing.*] But you only apply your evidence, with regard to the diminution of the population, to the two counties?—Yes.

2748. You say this in your pastoral, "It is a matter of notoriety, that two of the most cruel and extensive exterminators in this diocese had been centres of Ribbonism, in their respective districts, while carrying their inhuman clearances through"?—Yes.

2749. Without mentioning names, unless you are asked by some of the Members of the Committee to do so, will you explain to the Committee what you mean by that sentence?—I have been credibly informed, that it was almost universally believed in these two districts that those two gentlemen, whilst carrying their evictions through, had a regular confederation of Ribbonmen to protect them. I will first speak of one case. I have not a personal knowledge, nor do I live near where this person resided, although I know where the eviction occurred, but I have been told by a priest many years ago, and the parish priest at the present moment confirms, in a general way, his statement, that there was a person, whose name I will not mention, who kept a public-house near a chapel; this person was a head Ribbonman in the district, and whilst the evictions about him were being carried through, if anyone ventured to say one word of this person at a fair, or a market, or a funeral, or any gathering that took place, the phraseology I think was, that his head would be broken; consequently the evictions were allowed to go on quietly, until they were completed. Then that proprietor proceeded to evict the Ribbonman himself, who when he saw the use that had been made of him whilst the clearances were being carried on, said, "I see now what I have done, but I will only say, to revenge myself and others, that if you put me out I will send a bullet through your heart.' Then he was allowed to remain quietly there until he died; he died about two months ago, and his widow was not evicted, I believe, but she was purchased out by his (the proprietor's) son, both parties, the landlord and the Ribbonman, being dead.

2750. Was that generally believed in the country?—Perhaps I might explain myself in this way. I believe honestly that if the people of the district were interrogated and questioned about that, eight out of every ten at any rate would make the very statement that I have made.

2751. When was it, when he was about being evicted, that he made that statement?—I could not say because this proprietor had two evictions, but I think that it was in the greater eviction.

2752. Will you tell the Committee in what year that was?—From 1835 to 1843 there were upwards of 200 people evicted from one townland. Then there is another eviction mentioned afterwards, and this letter which I have (*producing the letter*) says, that: "In the first case of eviction mentioned above it is generally believed that the proprietor and those acting for him had a secret understanding with the Ribbonmen and endeavoured to conciliate them for the purpose of effecting the work of extermination with greater facility; that seems to be between 1835 to 1843." The other, I think, took place in 1867. "Five or six families in 1867, comprising 25 individuals farming land to the extent of 160 acres." Those were very respectable farmers and very good men.

2753. You have met with these cases yourself?—Yes; I have known some of them.

2754. Mr. *Hardy.*] Does that refer to the county of Meath or Westmeath?—That is in Meath. Now with regard to the case which came under my own observation in Westmeath. I lived quite near for a great many years to the parish in which those evictions took place. The proprietor lived I suppose about eight or nine miles from where I lived, for about 12 or 14 years, and I would say the same of him with this exception, that I had greater opportunities of learning the general belief regarding him, because I lived in a large town, and there was a continual influx of people from his parish into the town, and I met them in different capacities. I have heard hundreds of times, I suppose, that it was the general belief of every person in the whole district that this proprietor while he was carrying out his evictions had a band of Ribbonmen to protect him. I have been told that upon three or four occasions his life was in danger; that persons really plotted to take away his life, but that he was apprised of their intention by the Ribbonmen favourable to him, and went another way and escaped.

2755. Mr. *Downing.*] Do you know whether the proprietor had the protection of police for a considerable time driving with him?—Yes, I know that he had for a considerable time, up to

two

two years ago. I never saw the police with him, but everybody knew it.

2756. When did the second case of clearance take place?—This proprietor had several evictions in different parishes; three, at any rate.

2757. Mr. *Russell Gurney.*] The honourable Member refers to the clearance which was effected by the proprietor who had a band of Ribbonmen about him?—I cannot say whether this is 1850 or 1860 in the letter, because it is illegible, but I think that it is 1850; from my returns it appears that 186 people were evicted upon that occasion; I remember that those evictions were called "The Old Road evictions."

2758. Mr. *Downing.*] Although you are talking of another eviction, you are talking of the same proprietor who evicted the 700 people whom you mentioned in your pastoral, are you not?—No; I was present upon the occasion of the eviction of 700, that was the first case that is mentioned in the pastoral.

2759. Was that done by the proprietor who had the protection of the police?—No; the person whom I have just described as having the protection of the police, was the person who evicted 186 persons, and he made other evictions in other parishes.

2760. You say that about two years ago he ceased to have the police about with him?—Yes, about two years ago.

2761. Did you hear any reason given for that?—I do not know what was the reason, but I have heard that he was protected by the Ribbonmen while the evictions were being carried through; I believe, in fact I am certain, that attempts were made upon his life, and that he got the protection of the police; he had police guarding him for a long time, four or five years, I think, but I am not positive; but he has not had them for the last two years, or thereabouts.

2762. Does he permanently reside in the county of Westmeath?—No, he does not remain there during the winter months; when he is there at all it is during the summer months, but during the winter and spring I think he resides almost constantly in England.

2763. Would you be good enough to state what, in your opinion, is the cause of these agrarian crimes in Westmeath?—I should think that private revenge for these evictions is the cause.

2764. Do you believe that the recollection of these evictions is still fresh in the memory of the people?—I am quite certain that it is, and that the bad feelings created in the minds of the people evicted are transmitted even to their children, and are nearly as fresh at this moment, and perhaps in some instances more vivid and more dangerous, than even when the evictions took place long ago, although the objects of the evictions might have been the fathers of some now living.

2765. Have you yourself reason to know that that is the case?—I believe that certainly to be the case; and I find that a great many of the priests, in their replies to me, state that these evictions are still fresh in the memories of those now living in the district. Eviction is a thing which settles very deeply in the minds of the people; it is a very cruel and hard thing; I shall never forget the eviction which I myself witnessed.

2766. Will you allow me to ask your opinion with regard to the state of the labouring population in Westmeath?—The state of the labouring population in Westmeath seems to me to be most deplorable. There is scarcely any employment at all in Westmeath, except perhaps during a month in spring and perhaps another month in harvest; I am sure I am speaking to the outside.

2767. Will you be good enough to inform the Committee what is the usual rate of wages in your district?—During these two months it sometimes ranges very high.

2768. But what are the ordinary wages?—I should say a man would be quite content if he had 1 *s.* a day, with the exception of those two months.

2769. Is that in the neighbourhood of Mullingar?—In the neighbourhood of Mullingar, and in every part of the county of Westmeath with which I am acquainted. In many instances they have no employment at all.

2770. Are the labourers in a very poor condition in the county of Meath?—I think that they are, even worse than in Westmeath.

2771. Throughout the whole county of Meath you think that they are in a worse condition than in Westmeath?—Certainly I think so; there is one great drawback in Meath that does not occur in Westmeath. In Westmeath the turf or fuel is plentiful, but there is no fuel at all in Meath. Coal is too expensive, and they cut down bushes and trees where they are allowed to do so, and that is the only thing they have for fuel, so that their cabins and hovels in Meath are in a most wretched condition.

2772. It has been given in evidence by Mr. Boyd, with whom I presume you are acquainted, that he himself gave 9 *s.* a week and a house, and that that was the usual rate of wages; can you account for that difference between the two statements?—Mr. Boyd, I think, has contributed very much to the discomfort of the labourers in his district, because he has put them nearly all out. I have met myself in the parish of Mullingar a great many persons who were labourers and farmers upon Mr. Boyd's estate, and whom he evicted, and who entertained very unkind feelings towards him.

2773. And who came into Mullingar after being evicted?—Yes, they came into Mullingar, and that is the rule, that the labourers and small farmers when evicted from country districts flock into the towns, and are afterwards a most inflammable and dangerous set of people, because there are in the county of Westmeath, as I said, not regularly organised confederacies, but small knots of miscreants (not many of them) scattered here and there. They collect together in towns like Mullingar, and they gather round them a small clique of disaffected persons, particularly the sons of those who are evicted, and work upon their feelings, and say, "Look, you, you have been put out; that belonged to you;" and those miscreants (I do not know in what other way to describe them) use those poor thoughtless young men for very bad purposes; and although they are not bound by an oath, still they have great influence over them. There are little isolated knots and parties of that description in different parts of the county, and as near as I can form an opinion from the facts mentioned to me, I think that it is to these knots and parties that the outrages are to be attributed.

 2774. *Chairman.*]

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2774. *Chairman.*] Do you know from what course those evictions you have mentioned took place?—From a desire for consolidation; to enable the landlord to get his land in his own hands, I presume.

2775. Was that so in Mr. Boyd's case?—That is my belief.

2776. Mr. *Downing.*] Then do you wish the Committee to believe that in consequence of labourers having been turned off Mr. Boyd's estate, labour has become scarce, and that therefore Mr. Boyd is obliged to pay more for it than he would otherwise have done?—Yes, of course, and there is no labour to be had as a rule in the country places where the evictions took place; you must go into the towns and bring them out, and a very dangerous lot they are; they are demoralised immensely.

2777. In consequence of that state of things which you have described to the Committee, are you aware that labourers are obliged to go four or five miles to their work, and that they are taken out on carts by the farmers?—Yes, I have seen them.

2778. Have you yourself considered the steps that you thought it would be prudent to adopt in the county of Westmeath; what advice would you give to the Government or to the Committee for the suppression of this class of crime?—I have formed an opinion on that subject; I anticipated that question, and I have written out my opinion, if the Committee will permit me to read it.

2779. We should be glad to hear it?—I believe that the present laws, properly and strictly enforced, are quite sufficient to meet the present state of crime in Meath, Westmeath, and King's County, which I think it must be admitted is much below what it has been in former periods. I believe that when the action of the Land Bill is felt, and if the Legislature will improve the wretched condition of the labouring population, agrarian crime will cease more rapidly and permanently than by any coercive Legislation that may be enacted. The suspension of the Habeas Corpus might probably be attended with the result of checking agrarian crime, but as soon as its suspension would expire, the released parties would be free to renew their evil practices, and might be induced to do so through a desire to retaliate for their imprisonment. I would rather rely on more vigilant patrolling by the police, and I would increase the number of resident magistrates; I think that many of the public-houses are not well conducted, and are resorted to and frequented by bad characters for evil purposes. I would therefore recommend that more stringent supervision should be exercised by the authorities over the public-houses and that if any public-house was found to be improperly conducted or frequented by party men as meeting houses, the license should be withdrawn. I would also recommend that greater care should be exercised as to the persons to whom licenses should be given, and I think that the power of granting licenses should be confined to the chairman of the county alone, and during the continuance of the present disturbed condition of the counties the public-houses on Sundays should be open only for a short time, say from two to four o'clock, and should certainly be closed in the evening.

2780. You have recommended there that the granting of licenses should be given solely to the chairman of the county?—Yes, certainly.

2781. Could you give the Committee any reason for that recommendation?—One of my priests reported to me the following fact: he stated that he had signified his intention to oppose the granting of a license to a certain person in his parish; he was curate in this parish some years before the famine, and he heard his predecessor say, and he knew it himself partially, that this public-house was a regular meeting house for Ribbonmen, and further that a list of the Ribbonmen enrolled in this public-house would be sent to a gentleman in the neighbourhood very soon after the enrolment took place. The famine intervened, and the public-house was extinguished; after the famine the proprietor wished to have this house re-opened, and the parish priest said he would oppose him; a gentleman in the neighbourhood, the son to the person I have already mentioned, sent another gentleman (a doctor) to this priest, and told him, "You need not go in to-day to oppose the granting of the license, because I have persuaded him not to make the application." He (the priest) said, "I am afraid about that," and he went in.

2782. Was the gentleman you refer to a magistrate?—He was a magistrate. The priest went into the quarter sessions, and he made a statement before the barrister of what he knew of this house, and gave his reasons why in his judgment the license should not be granted. The barrister thanked him in open court, but said, however, that he was only one in this court but would be most happy to vote against this man getting a license. The stipendary magistrate (Mr. Cronin), who is dead, did the same, and another gentleman still living, Mr. Hornidge, did so. Then another gentleman in the neighbourhood got up and said that this man was a tenant of his, and that he would make his public-house a model public-house, and he talked on in that style, and succeeded in influencing a number of the local magistrates to outvote the chairman and the stipendiary magistrate and that other gentleman. The license was accordingly granted, and that public-house is a public-house to this day.

2783. Sir. *G. Grey.*] When did this take place?—I do not know when it took place.

2784. Do you think it occurred within the last 20 years?—It was after the famine.

2785. The famine was in 1846; how long after the famine was this?—I do not know how long it was after the famine. The public-house is open still, and it has a bad name to this day. There was a murder committed in the neighbourhood, and I have heard that that outrage was plotted in this public-house; that was one fact.

2786. Has any application been made to take away the license in consequence of the misconduct of the owner of the public-house?—I have not heard of any.

2787. Mr. *Downing.*] The Committee have had a case mentioned to them of a public in Mullingar where a Ribbon oath was found?—Yes, I know that house. It was found under Captain Talbot's direction; the police broke into the house, and they found a lot of Ribbonmen assembled there.

2788. From the reputation of that house, would you feel it your bounden duty to go yourself to the chairman of the county to request that this house should be deprived of its license?—I met the

the chairman by accident, and I took advantage of that meeting to tell him the character of this house, and to request that he would withdraw this license from it.

2789. Has the license been withdrawn?—Yes.

2790. It was recently you spoke about that, was it not?—Yes, it was not long ago that I spoke about it. Hearing that persons suspected to be party men were supposed to go to that public-house, I felt it my duty to allude to it from the pulpit, and to tell those parties that unless they discontinued frequenting it, I should be obliged to warn my flock against it, by mentioning their names.

2791. You know the case of a person who has been frequently mentioned here, called Captain Duffy, do you not?—Yes.

2792. Are you also aware that proceedings were taken against him by his landlord to evict him?—Yes.

2793. Are you aware whether he has called in the assistance of any parties to value his land before the chairman, in order to get compensation under the Land Act?—Yes, I am.

2794. Do you know whom he called in?—Yes, he called in two gentlemen.

2795. Is one a magistrate?—I am certain one is, and I think both are magistrates.

2796. Have they acted for him?—Yes, they have.

2797. Is that quite recently?—Yes, that is quite recently, and if the Committee wish I will mention the circumstances which have come to my knowledge reminding me of the case.

2798. Will you mention the facts, but not the names?—There is a gentleman in the neighbourhood who has, I believe, been fired at on more than one occasion; I think twice. This gentleman has a son, a doctor, in the village quite near where Captain Duffy lives, and this doctor told the circumstance to one of my priests, who has written to me, detailing a conversation he had with the doctor. "Only think," said the doctor, "of such a gentleman consenting to become a valuator for Captain Duffy to value his land under the new Act in case he was put out;" and when Captain Duffy asked him, this gentleman said to him, "If I do value your land I will be considered one of yourselves;" but eventually he did consent, according to the doctor's statement, being influenced by the advice of a steward of his, but with the understanding that the gentleman who was fired at before, and who was a friend of the magistrate who consented to value for Captain Duffy, would not be shot. "One can hardly imagine," added the doctor, "such a person asking Captain Duffy to pledge his honour that my father would not be shot, and accepting the valuation upon these terms." My priest has written a letter to me stating that fact which he had from the doctor.

2799. But the fact is that they have valued the land?—The fact is they have valued the land, and the general belief is, that the valuation has been a very liberal one.

2800. Have you had occasion to see the working and operation of what is called the police tax?—Yes, I have.

2801. Are you of opinion that the police tax has tended in any way to diminish crime?—On the contrary; I think that a most unfortunate Act altogether, and I think its effect will be to drive well-disposed people into disloyalty.

2802. Do you know yourself of cases in which humble farmers paying 10*l.* or 12*l.* a year, have had a tax imposed upon them, amounting to something like 10*l.* a year?—I heard a gentleman say so a little time ago. If an outrage is committed in a certain locality by some miscreant who is very likely not known at all in the district, then there will be an indemnity fine imposed; and, as a rule, an extra police force is quartered upon the people: this indemnity fine, according to the examples we have have seen already, is a very liberal one upon the part of the grand jury. I may give an example: there was a man of the name of Waters murdered in Mullingar. I knew Waters, not personally, but I knew his character, and I have known all about him for years past. Waters, in my opinion, scarcely could support himself, because he was constantly drinking, and was a very bad character; but his mother, to whom he could not give anything at all, for he could not support himself, was awarded 300*l.* Another person was shot in the neighbourhood; he had no family, and his wages only 10*s.* a week, but his widow was awarded by the grand jury 800*l.* I take these facts as indicative of the inclination of the grand jury to impose the fine liberally where the outrage occurs; and taking the two things together, first the indemnity fine, and then the support of the extra police force, I think the effect of it will be, if it goes on, shortly to exterminate the people altogether. The county of Westmeath consists, as a rule, of small farmers holding from five to perhaps 25 acres, and if a fine of 10*l.*, say the first year, is imposed upon them, and the same fine is imposed the next year, and the same fine is imposed the year after, the result of it would be that they would not be able to meet their engagements, and the consequence will be that they will be sold out, and by and-bye dispossessed for non-payment of rent; so that the end of it will be to drive these people to ruin, and they cannot be loyal under a system by which they are thus entirely ruined.

2803. And in case of eviction for non-payment of rent, they will not be entitled to compensation under the Land Bill?—So I have heard.

2804. Do you know of any cases in which circumstances occurred very much like those which you have described?—Yes. I know of a case of malicious burning, in which a woman said, "We have 10*l.* to pay, and I am afraid I shall not be able to meet the landlord afterwards."

2805. Was she a good person?—She was a woman of good religious character, an excellent person. I think that the narrowing of the area of taxation to a particular place, consequent upon an outrage, is the same thing as saying that the inhabitants of that locality have some kind of complicity with the perpetrator of the outrage; and I think that that very imputation on the part of the authorities degrades the inhabitants in their own estimation, that they, being innocent and honest men, should be held up and punished as if they were abettors of assassination and murder. That may be a sentimental thing, but I think the people feel it.

2806. Mr. *Hardy.*] I understand you to state that Ribbonism, in your opinion, does not exist as a confederacy at present in the county of Westmeath?—Certainly it does not.

2807. In what sense, then, does it exist?—In this sense: that there are certain small cliques of vagabonds here and there through the county, who formerly belonged to the regular Ribbon

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confederacy, and who may be considered to be, as it were, the disbanded Ribbonmen of former times.

2808. But, as a secret society, does or does not Ribbonsim still exist, in your opinion?—Only in the sense in which I explained.

2809. As I understand you, it does not exist with the same oath sand passwords as formerly?—In my opinion, there are no oaths or passwords as there were formerly, nor obedience to one head, nor a common executive, nor a common authority.

2810. In former times did you, as missionary, a priest, obtain much more information as to what was going on by the Ribbon Society, than you do now?—I knew all about it as a missionary priest.

2811. And at present you do not?—I cannot find anything about it; and every priest I have consulted has given me the same answer. I have here a letter which gives a sample of the statement of the priests regarding it: "For the rest, although I have been in constant and most intimate intercourse with the people of these parishes for nearly six years, I have not found any traces of a Ribbon confederacy anywhere; and I venture to pledge myself that no such confederacy exists. During the last seven months" he goes on to say, "some outrages have occurred."

2812. Does that refer to Meath or Westmeath?—That refers to Meath, in which a very celebrated eviction took place not very long ago in a certain parish.

2813. What part of Meath is that; is that the part adjoining Westmeath?—Not far from Westmeath; the parish is a place called Enfield, or Jordan's Town.

2814. There is, in fact, in Westmeath, to your knowledge, is there not, and in that part of Meath adjoining Westmeath, a system of terrorism prevailing, which prevents information being given respecting these outrages?—I could not say that it is terrorism.

2815. At all events, you do not get information?—None whatever.

2816. If the magistrates tell us that they do not, I suppose no information is got at all?—I suppose that is a fair inference.

2817. If it is not terrorism, what is it that prevents information being got?—I think the outrages committed are the isolated acts of parties who take care to have no accomplices; that is one of my reasons for thinking that there is no Ribbon confederacy at all, for if there were such an organised combination, I cannot understand how they do not inform one upon another, and peach as they used to do some time ago.

2818. Are there many secret societies in your diocese?—Yes, there are in that sense.

2819. You say in your pastoral, "But the Ribbonism that at present prevails, besides degenerating into a totally different form from what it had been formerly, contradicts directly not merely the counsels of the Gospel, but strikes at the very root of Christianity itself;" I understood you to say that no Ribbonism prevailed?—I have explained in what sense I understand that Ribbonism which I have described there. I called it by the name of Ribbonism, as that was the most convenient name, although the term has not the same meaning that it had long ago.

2820. I understood you to say that there are relations still subsisting between exterminating landlordism and Ribbonism?—I did not say exactly that. I said I believed that there were not unfriendly relations subsisting between them.

2821. Therefore you must, of course, believe in the existence of Ribbonism?—Yes, of that class.

2822. Let me ask you whether this is the effect of those secret societies, whether Ribbon or whatever they may be: is this a true description of the district which you superintend, namely, Westmeath and Meath: "Every man now fears that scores of assassins are secretly and stealthily lurking about in the very midst of us. The mystery in which they have shrouded themselves, and with which they have hitherto successfully concealed themselves, has spread terror and alarm among all classes of society. Every man is in terror for his life, and trembles for his safety"?—That is the view that I have taken of it in regard to carrying out the argument I was enforcing.

2823. Did you mean to make a statement in the truth of which you believed?—Of course I believed it to be true.

2824. And you believe that that condition of things is now existing in Westmeath?—Yes, in this sense that I have explained.

2825. That is to say, that they are secret societies, which are, in your opinion, either isolated societies or separate societies, but still all secret?—Yes, they are separate, but with a sort of understanding between them, because they are associated for the same object.

2826. When you say that the existing law is able to meet these cases, will you point out to the Committee in what way it is able to deal with them?—In the first place, I say I would be most particular in reference to the public-houses.

2827. That would be a new law to put in force with respect to public-houses?—I do not know whether it would have to go through the Legislature. I would close the public-houses on Sundays, as I say, except for a little while, and then I would be most cautious in the giving of licenses, and endeavour not to give licenses except to houses that were well conducted. I would transfer the right of giving licenses from the local magistrates to the assistant barrister or chairman, because at present a feeling seems to me to prevail that the Ribbonmen calculate that, from fear or some other cause, the local magistrates will treat them with more leniency than the stipendiary magistrates would. I will explain that by saying, that I think the relations now existing between Ribbonmen and some local magistrates is somewhat similar to what prevailed in Belfast some years ago between the Orangemen of Belfast and the local magistracy. I think that that is the best *simile* or comparison which I could give to illustrate what I conceive to be something like the relations that are believed by the people to exist between some of the magistracy and the Ribbonmen in Westmeath; and I believe that if there were fearless, honest, and independent resident magistrates brought in in greater number than at present, and well paid, the police would have greater confidence, and the people too. I firmly believe that that alone, acting with the will of the people, would be sufficient, because the people hate these murderers and these assassins. Now they are beginning to appreciate the benefits of the Land Act; and public opinion and energetic, honest magistracy, with an efficient constabulary, I think, are quite sufficient to stamp out all these offences.

2828. You have on many occasions spoken of what is usually believed to be the understanding subsisting between the Ribbonmen and the exterminating landlords; can you give the Committee any single fact upon which you can justify that assertion?—I have already stated that a man who is reputed——

2829. That is general supposition, not personal knowledge?—It is illustrative of what I believe to be the fact. I have already stated another fact in reference to that, and also I have referred to public-houses.

2830. But can you give us any special fact bearing upon any particular individual, without mentioning his name; can you give the Committee any fact, of your own knowledge, from which you would infer this relation between Ribbonmen and exterminating landlords?—I have no information of my own; all my information is derived from my priests, as I stated before.

2831. With respect to the resident magistrates, have you any fault to find with the resident magistrates who have been here, Captain Talbot, Mr. Reade, and Captain Barry?—I do not know Mr. Reade sufficiently, but I believe Captain Barry to be a really efficient magistrate.

2832. And what is your opinion with regard to Captain Talbot?—I hardly like to give any opinion respecting individual gentlemen; but I have a letter here, in which he has been accused of neglecting his duty upon one or two occasions. I do not know whether that is well founded or not; but it has influenced me so far that I will not pledge my belief to his being so effective as I think he might be. I do not bring any charge against him, but I have a letter in my possession in which it is stated that an outrage was committed, and that he was sent for, and that he did not come over. That happened, I think, upon two occasions; he might have been engaged elsewhere, but the priest complains that he did not come, and he complains also that the perpetrators of the outrage were not followed up, and that if they had been efficiently followed up then, there would probably have been a detection. From those facts stated to me (I have no knowledge of my own of Captain Talbot) I have formed my opinion; but I certainly can speak very highly of Captain Barry.

2833. In former days, when you were acquainted with Ribbonism, was it then a society extending over a certain district, with a central body working it as one machine?—I think so.

2834. At present, you think that it has dispersed into separate societies?—Yes, I think it has dispersed into separate societies.

2835. And you are of opinion that there is no centre?—That there is no centre, and that there is no union subsisting between them, except, perhaps, a sort of sympathy in a bad cause.

2836. And in your view it is incorrect to say that there are five or six persons at the head of the whole thing in Westmeath upon whom the magistracy could lay their hands?—There are five or six persons at the heads of these little cliques or knots, as I have said.

2837. And, in your belief, these little cliques or knots have no association one with the other?—I think so.

2838. Was the Ribbonism of former days an association for interfering, whenever they supposed or imagined that there was interference required, between landlord and tenant?—Yes; that was the object which was looked up to in former times by the people for protection from the landlords. They believed that the terror inspired into the landlords by the Ribbonmen made the evictions fewer, and that many families in many places would have been ejected were it not that the landlord was in terror of being shot in case he carried those evictions through. They believed that they had no protection from the law for their industry, or for their homes, and then they looked up to the Ribbonmen for such protection.

2839. The system of Ribbonism was to carry out its purposes by terror, and by putting people to death who opposed their laws?—Yes; to put a stop to evictions by a system of terror upon the part of landlords.

2840. The effect of this broken-up system, as you imagine it to be, is to carry this same kind of terrorism into the relations between master and servant, as well as between landlord and tenant?—They inspire terror, certainly, in many instances.

2841. But I understand that in the pastoral which you have issued, you say that a great part of it "has been devoted to a defence of the Ribbonmen of former times from the obloquy and infamy with which," in your judgment, "it" (I suppose you mean Ribbonism) "has been branded"?—Yes.

2842. In what way do you distinguish the crime and terrorism which exist now from that which existed in former times?—I am glad that you asked me that question, because when I began to write that pastoral my object was to warn the people against Ribbonism, or against being misled or led away by the parties I have alluded to. Then, of course, I knew that there was a feeling, or prejudice if you like, in the minds of the people which was favourable to the Ribbonism of former times; it was a thing of the past; it melted away from the action of the clergy especially, and also from people beginning to see that their condition was very much better now than it was formerly. But still they had some kind of regard for the Ribbonism of the past, for they said that they thought that the law did not protect them, and that Ribbonism did; and therefore I thought that if I went direct against all secret Ribbon societies I should do no good. I therefore felt it my duty to detail the circumstances that called Ribbonism first into existence, in order to show what its object was, and to tell my people that whatever may have been the case as regarded the Ribbonism of former days, the circumstances which created it, and which gave it any colour of justice, had passed away, and that the Ribbonism which now prevailed was a different thing; that it was not actuated by that sort of patriotic motives which seemed to actuate it long ago, but that it was a society the character of which was entirely changed, and the organisation of which was concocted for the express purpose of committing murders. If I had said of the Ribbonism of former times that it was an organisation for the purpose of committing murder I would not be listened to.

2843. As I understand, the view you took was this: "The circumstances, therefore, that called Ribbonism into existence; and that ever lent to it even an appearance of justice, have now passed away for ever; hence the principle of aggregation in the Ribbonism of the present day is not a purpose of necessary self-defence, but a purpose

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of positive and unjust aggression; Ribbonmen do not now combine to fight for their own lives when unjustly assailed, but to attack unjustly, and take away the lives of others, whom they had not the slightest human or Divine right to injure;" was that an expression of your opinion with reference to the two kinds of Ribbonism, the one which existed formerly, and the one which now exists?—No, but of the one existing, although I condemned both.

2844. What do you mean by aggregation in the Ribbonism of the present day?—The principle upon which they unite is to do positive injury to their neighbours.

2845. You have used the word "aggregation:" what do you mean by that expression?—In all these isolated societies there is the principle of aggregation upon a small scale.

2846. It is an aggregation of Ribbonism there?—Yes, it is an aggregation of Ribbonism in that sense.

2847. In your opinion, then, have these societies that aggregation one with another?—They know each other.

2848. In former times you say that you knew the state of Ribbonism?—Yes.

2849. Now you say that you do not know whether these societies hold communication one with the other?—I believe that they do not.

2850. Do you know that of your own knowledge?—I have no positive information of my own on that point.

2851. Have you any reliable information as to whether they do or not?—I have no positive information except that which I consider to be a solid argument derived from the facts submitted to me. I think that if there were any recognised and acknowledged communication between them, so far as to make them all one society, it would be impossible that such an association as that would exist without the priests knowing it. When the priests say they have no knowledge of it, I believe that it does not exist; if it did exist, I believe that the members of the Ribbon Society would inform upon one another.

2852. With respect to Captain Duffy, of whom you have spoken, I understand that he is not the tenant, but that his father is; is he or his father the tenant?—I should think that his father died many years ago, or he must be a very old man.

2853. It was stated to the Committee that Captain Duffy was the son of the tenant?—I think that Captain Duffy is an old man himself, and has one or two daughters married. I am not positive, but I believe that to be the fact.

2854. I will only ask you one question more with reference to the publicity of your charge; I presume that this has been printed with your assent?—Yes, it has.

2855. And I find also that you gave directions that it should be posted up in various parts of your diocese?—Yes.

2856. As well as printed separately?—I gave directions that it should be posted up in the churches; the Latin paragraph is very badly printed, and is made very ungrammatical.

2857. It is ordered that it is to be read two or three times in the chapels?—Twice.

2858. And also to be fixed upon certain tablets?—Yes; I wished to have it read twice, in order that the parties who probably would benefit by it might hear it; it would catch them at some of the masses.

2859. It was made in your diocese perfectly public?—Yes, for my own people.

2860. And for anybody who chose to look at it?—Anybody who came into the diocese; that is the case with all my pastorals; they are printed and posted upon tablets in the church, so that any person may read them.

2861. Mr. *Bruen.*] You illustrated the relation subsisting between Ribbonism and the local magistracy by saying that it was the same thing that existed between the local magistracy at Belfast and the Orangemen?—I stated that I thought there was a striking resemblance between them.

2862. Therefore I may assume that you consider the relations subsisting between Ribbonism and the local magistrates of Westmeath to be of an extremely friendly character?—Not unfriendly in some instances.

2863. How do you account for the fact that when any outrage is brought to trial at the assizes, the first challenges which are exercised on behalf of the prisoner are always directed against the local magistrates, and that they are at once struck off the panel by the prisoner's challenge?—I do not know whether the fact is so.

2864. It was proved here by the clerk of the Crown, and assuming that to be so, how do you account for it?—My observation was qualified. I did not say that it applied to all, but only to some. If the counsel for the prisoner knew that such friendly or not unfriendly feeling existed between them, he would probably not challenge them. Perhaps the parties who were struck off would be parties who had no feeling whatever with the prisoner. I have no knowledge about the fact.

2865. I thought you stated that it was the general feeling amongst the people of the country that this friendly relation existed?—Yes, between the Ribbonmen and some of the magistrates; but God forbid that I should say all. I do not know anything of that kind. If you will have the kindness to refer to my pastoral, you will find that I speak highly of the character of the magistrates; and I say that their justice and impartiality are beyond all praise, or something to that effect.

2866. But you also say that their justice and impartiality are in some cases by no means above suspicion?—Yes, I say that.

2867. Where would those parties principally be found that you allude to?—Principally in Westmeath.

2868. In what parts of Westmeath?—Perhaps in some of the disturbed districts.

2869. Have you any ground for believing, as you say, that in certain districts the justice and impartiality of the magistrates are by no means above suspicion?—Yes, I have grounds for that belief.

2870. Sir *G. Grey.*] Will you inform the Committee what are the facts upon which you found that belief?—I have already detailed some of them.

2871. Mr. *Bruen.*] The public-house case which you mentioned, for instance?—The public-house case, and the continuance of the public-house, and the case which I have also stated of this Captain Duffy selecting a magistrate to value for him. When his attorney suggested to him to select two men of his own standing, he said, "Oh, I will get two gentlemen." Then, I have stated another fact which,

which, I think, points to the same conclusion: the fact which was mentioned by the priest, that a sort of understanding existed between that person and a certain magistrate, who undertook the valuation upon the understanding that his friend would not be shot.

2872. In the early part of your pastoral, you speak of an extensive clearance, where the same proprietor you had previously referred to "desolated, in an adjoining parish, a densely populated district, by batches of so many families, in each of a series of successive clearances:" was that a long time ago?—I have already said that I could not say when it happened, I should think that it was in 1850 or in 1860, or about that time.

2873. That was the clearance you referred to, in which you said that the date was rather illegible in the letter which you read?—Yes, there were two figures, one over the other; it might be a 5, or it might be a 6, but my impression about it is that it was 1850.

2874. Is that transaction mentioned in the pastoral the same case as that which you mentioned in your evidence as being one of the two where two of the most cruel and extensive exterminators in this diocese had been centres of Ribbonism; you remember that, in support of that statement, you gave the Committee two cases?—I did.

2875. And in the latter of the two cases which you mentioned, the principal eviction was either in 1850 or in 1860?—Yes; that was the Old Road eviction.

2876. That is where 186 people were evicted?—Yes, where the 186 people were evicted.

2877. You told the Committee that the proprietor who carried out those evictions ceased to have police protection two years ago?—Yes.

2878. And that before that he had had police protection?—Yes, he had.

2879. And that attempts were made upon his life?—Yes, there were.

2880. And that he is the same proprietor who, though resident in Westmeath for a portion of the year, resides in England during the winter and spring?—Yes. I would not make the statements so circumstantial about any individual, were I not pressed by the Committee to do so; perhaps I am wrong in doing so.

2881. The fact is, that your evidence is so very pointed and so very circumstantial, that one can hardly avoid connecting it with the name of a certain gentleman?—I did not intend to point to any gentleman's name.

2882. I think that I am bound to ask you whether that individual whom you have mentioned, and whom you have described so very distinctly, is Mr. Boyd?—Am I bound to answer that question?

2883. I now press the question I asked you before, whether the person you have alluded to as having evicted 186 people in 1850, and who two years ago ceased to have the protection of the police, having had it before that time, was Mr. Boyd?—Yes; I allude to Mr. Boyd.

2884. Can you tell the Committee whether you have any information with reference to the cause of those evictions; whether they were for non-payment of rent, or from what cause they arose?—I have no positive information with respect to that; but the information which I have received generally of the evictions was accompanied with a note to this effect: "No rent due." I do not know whether that is so in this particular case or not, but there has been a note appended to nearly all the evictions which I have got information of, saying, "No rent due." In one case I remember eight families were evicted, two only owing rent.

2885. I want to ask you a question relating to the character of Ribbonism; do you think that this is a fair description of the Ribbonism of former days such as you describe it: "The annals of secret societies in Ireland are stamped with the same character which distinguishes them in other countries. Under whatever name they have concealed their wicked purposes, they have been a scourge and a curse, a reproach, and a stumbling-block to our unhappy country; the only effects which followed upon them were faction, discord, civil strife, and bloodshed"?—I do not think that the Ribbonism of Ireland could be put upon the same footing as the secret societies of other countries. I do not think that they are at all so bad as the secret societies in Italy or France, especially in Italy. I think that the object of these secret societies in Ireland in the commencement was to establish a sort of protection for the people against landlords who were inclined to evict them. Of course that was a bad and unlawful thing, but I do not think that it had the same amount of unlawfulness and wickedness as the secret societies had in Italy and elsewhere, because in other places they were positively diabolical. I do not think that they were so bad in Ireland, because I think that the moment the pressure of evictions is removed the societies will drop off in this country. They have not a distinct independent vitality in Ireland the same as they have in other countries, especially in Italy.

2886. But do you believe that they were a curse, a reproach, and a stumbling-block?—Of course they were a curse and a reproach to those who were engaged in them, and a stumbling-block too; but still the people believed that they saved them in many cases from being evicted, and that many evictions which would have occurred were actually stayed. Of course they are undoubtedly a curse and a scourge, and we always regarded them as such, and denounced them as such, but I do not think that they were so bad by any means as in other countries.

2887. That extract which I read was from Archbishop Cullen's charge in 1851?—I guessed that from the very style of it.

2888. Mr. *Russell Gurney.*] When do you suppose the Ribbon Society first existed in Ireland?—I could not say. I know that I found it existing when I began to understand and think. I knew nothing actually about it until I became a priest. I was ordained in 1846, and came out upon missionary work in 1847.

2889. Have you any reason to doubt that it existed long before the beginning of this century?—I have not thought upon that subject.

2890. I think you spoke of these different bodies now existing as being associated together with the same object?—I spoke of sympathy between them, not association.

2891. It was a mistake if you used the word "association"?—If I did, it was a mistake.

2892. Do you suppose them to exist for the same object?—I suppose that they have the same object in view.

2893. What is that object?—To carry out the wishes

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wishes of their principals; to perpetrate these outrages.

2894. What outrages do you refer to?—Any outrages which they agree among themselves shall be committed.

2895. But you speak of different bodies existing for the same object; now what is the one object which those different bodies exist for?—I attribute the outrages which actually occur to these bodies.

2896. But what is the object of these outrages?—To benefit some person who asked their help. Suppose, for example, a person has lost and wants to recover land that he held in his possession some years before, which he had lost either for non-payment of rent, or because he gave it up; that is a very common case. Outrages are frequently committed to recover land held by persons some years before, and which they want to get back. I suppose in such a case as that they would apply to one of these bodies, or to their employés, and they would say, "Will you try to pay a domiciliary visit to this house, or write a threatening letter, to get me back my land?"

2897. Do you suppose that to be the one object for which they all exist?—That is one of the objects. I suppose the society to be ready for any object; the object is an outrage.

2898. Is it solely with the view of getting back possession of land?—That is one class of outrage, but I think that there are various classes.

2899. I am not asking what are the particular outrages to be committed, but what is the object which these particular bodies have in view for which they exist?—I think that they have no particular object at all in view.

2900. Then they do not exist for the same object?—They are ready if called upon to perpetrate any outrage for anybody whom they think fit or deserving.

2901. You think that they only exercise their power on behalf of those whom they consider deserving objects?—I think so; I do not know whether they do it indiscriminately for everybody. I suppose they have their favourites.

2902. Do you consider that it is a deserving object to commit outrages?—I think they are a lot of thoughtless boys under the rule of one head villain.

2903. You think each of those different bodies has one head who rules them all?—I do not mean to say that at all; I say that there are isolated individuals in different districts, and they may have young and thoughtless men about them, and would exercise their influence upon them.

2904. What you stated was that you thought there was one head who ruled each particular body?—Yes.

2905. That is what I ask you; you say that there are several persons, each of whom exercises his influence over a distinct body?—There may be only one or two.

2906. Is one or two enough?—I mean one or two individuals in each of these little cliques.

2907. Then it is only by a few persons that all these different bodies are ruled?—I believe that firmly.

2908. Are those persons pretty well known?—I do not know; they are said to be known, but of course I have no direct positive knowledge of that.

2909. You do not obtain the same information respecting them that you did many years ago, do you?—Not at all.

2910. You have not the same knowledge of their organisation, or whether there is an organisation at all?—I believe that there is no organisation at all.

2911. But you have not the same knowledge with reference to whether there is or is not an organisation as you had formerly?—I could not have any knowledge of their being an organisation if it does not exist; but I have knowledge sufficient to prove, in my judgment, that no organisation exists.

2912. Have you the same knowledge respecting the organisation and government of the Ribbon Society that you used to have formerly?—No; I could not have a knowlege of their proceedings, organizations, or government, because I think none such exist; I do not believe in it.

2913. Are there the same proceedings that there used to be?—They are verbal proceedings, not regular proceedings at all.

2914. But there is a certain system upon which each particular body acts, is there not?—I do not know that there is.

2915. You do not know in what way they are governed?—I do not think that they have any government at all.

2916. Except that they act under the direction of one head?—One individual has an influence over three or four parties of men, and manages to carry out his purpose through them; I think he is responsible for any outrages which are committed by the clique that he has influence over, but anything like government I do not think exists at all.

2917. Have you any means of knowing whether it exists?—I feel certain that if such an organisation or government existed, it could not possibly escape the knowledge of the priests of the district; one or two might be mistaken, but 30 or 40 could not, I think.

2918. Is that your only reason for arriving at that conclusion?—That is only one reason.

2919. What is the other?—The other is that if such an organisation as that existed, I think some of them would peach on one or other.

2920. Have you any other reason?—Another reason is that, as regards every outrage which I know to have occurred recently, I believe it not to have been the result of combination at all, but to have been isolated instances of personal revenge.

2921. Do you think that however they are ruled there is a great deal of fear of them upon the part of the people who are themselves well disposed?—I do not think that they are so much dreaded; of course nobody would wish to provoke them, I suppose.

2922. To what do you attribute the fact which has been stated to the Committee, that no food could be obtained for Crown witnesses in a certain case in the public-houses in Mullingar, that the people keeping them had warning that they could not be allowed to remain in the houses, and were consequently obliged to be removed to Dublin; would that be from sympathy or terror, do you think?—I do not believe it to be the fact.

2923. To what do you attribute the fact that so many outrages are reported, and yet there is not a single prosecution; does that relate to a want of vigour on the part of the magistrates and

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the police?—I think it arises from the circumspection and care with which the outrages are committed; they are almost all cases of isolated individuals.

2924. One case we had reported to us was a case of seven men appearing in arms to threaten a particular house; in that case the want of prosecution could not arise from the absence of persons to impeach?—Of course that may be so; in that case I do not know how to account for it; they might have been friends or cousins engaged in it.

2925. Sir *G. Grey.*] Are you aware that there is a general dislike in Westmeath to give evidence on oath in order to convict persons guilty of these outrages?—I do not know that such a disposition exists; I know, of course, that they would rather not be called on.

2926. Mr. *Russell Gurney.*] You say that this system exists in Westmeath; do you believe that there is anything like this system prevailing out of Westmeath in the parts adjoining?—I have no reason to think that there is.

2927. You are of opinion that it is confined to Westmeath?—There have been outrages committed in a portion of the King's County.

2928. Did they occur in the parts adjoining Westmeath?—Not immediately adjoining; at a considerable distance from Westmeath.

2929. If you find outrages existing in the parts adjoining Westmeath, do you think that that affords evidence of there being some common centre in Westmeath?—No, I think not.

2930. Do you think that if they take place in Westmeath, or Meath, or Longford, or in the parts adjoining, those are the acts of separate bodies?—Yes; but I believe that the heads of these small cliques are known to one another, known, perhaps, from the fact of their having belonged to a common organisation in days gone by, which has passed away, but still they remember each other, and they know each other, and I dare say that if any one of these parties wished to have an outrage perpetrated near home, and there was danger of him being detected himself, he would know how to find other parties farther away to come and perpetrate an outrage, in order that the difficulty of detection might be greater.

2931. You are of opinion that there would be a common knowledge among these parties?—I think that they know each other.

2932. And still you think that the fact of no information being given shows that there is no organised body?—Yes, I think it is one of the considerations out of several; I take the accumulated effect of all.

2933. If there is this knowledge existing between the heads of the several bodies, do you attach the same weight to what you said before, that non-giving of information was a proof of the want of organisation?—Yes, I think so, because the facility for giving information would be very much increased if the society was extended into different counties. If it was such an organisation as it was in days gone by, there would be a number of persons admitted into it, some of whom would be sure to peach upon the others, but where there are only a few, the chances of detection are very small.

2934. Are not the chances of detection small in proportion as society is well organised?—If the organisation is large, I think not.

2935. But if the organisation is small, but complete, are not the chances of detection still less?—Yes; if there are only a few individuals, of course the chances of informing upon each other are diminished.

2936. But are not the chances less in proportion to the goodness and completeness of the organisation?—*Cæteris paribus*, of course.

2937. Mr. *Plunket.*] As regards this Old Road eviction, which you spoke of, is the evidence you have given here of your own knowledge, or of what has been communicated to you?—From what has been communicated to me.

2938. It has been communicated to you in the same way as the rest of the evidence has been which you have given here?—Yes, at the same time that I remember to have heard of the evictions going on. I remember this eviction in particular, but I am not personally acquainted with it.

2939. Then, as I understand you, the distinction between the Old Road evictions and the others, so far as your knowledge of them goes, is that whereas in the other cases you have only the information which you have received as to this Old Road eviction, you have besides some personal recollection?—Yes, but it is hearsay only.

2940. Upon what authority is it that you give the Committee to understand that 186 people were evicted upon that occasion?—From the authority of the present pastor of the parish, who has gone round and made all inquiries to ascertain even the names of the parties evicted.

2941. You have considerable confidence in that clergyman, no doubt?—Yes; I am sure that he would not wilfully mislead me; he may be mistaken certainly.

2942. You have as much confidence in him as in any of your other informants of the same class?—Yes, I am sure that he would not intentionally mislead me; any one of them might make mistakes.

2943. But as regards the first eviction you spoke of, relating to the 700 people, that was a very glaring instance, in your opinion?—It was.

2944. Do you know of any more cases as grave and serious cases as that?—There are none of them that have made such an impression upon me as that, because I have seen that myself. I have not seen the character of the others.

2945. But have you heard of greater horrors than that very graphic story about the 700 people which you have written in your pastoral?—Yes, I have.

2946. How long ago?—A great many years ago; and I have heard of one proprietor who, when asked by a tenant, whom he had just evicted, "What will I do, sir?" replied that he might go up and nestle with the crows in the trees; and there have been other instances like that, which wounded people's feelings very much.

2947. Is that what you refer to when you say this: "The eviction which I have thus described, and of which I was an eyewitness, must not be considered an isolated exceptional event which could occur only in a remote locality where public opinion could not reach and expose it. The fact is quite the reverse. Every county, barony, poor law union, and indeed every parish in

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in the diocese, is perfectly familiar with evictions, which are sometimes surrounded by circumstances, and distinguished by traits of darker and more disgusting atrocity"?—Yes, I think it is quite true. If you want to know what was on my mind at the time I wrote those words, I would say that there were two things on my mind. First, that thing about nestling in the trees; and in the next place I heard a poor man say, "Oh, Sir, what will I do?" and the party said, "Why if I were in your position I would go and drown myself." I heard that, and that was in my mind, and other little incidents, of that exaggerated atrocity in eviction such as to wound people's feelings in addition to evicting them.

2948. Did you, having only these little incidents in your mind, of which you have now told the Committee, write that sentence?—It is very hard at this distance of time to remember in writing a long letter like that what was in my mind, but I had those two things in my mind. I did not lose much time in writing that pastoral, and I could not remember how many little things were on my mind at every word I wrote.

2949. You tell the Committee that you did not take much time in writing this pastoral!—Of course had I thought that the same importance would be attached to it, as there has happened to be, I would have taken more time about it.

2950. Will you explain to the Committee what you mean; what greater importance can be attached to any document in Ireland than to a document which proceeds from the bishop of a diocese?—By his people. I have addressed to them several such documents, and nobody ever heard anything about them beyond the diocese.

2951. But will you explain to the Committee what you mean by saying that you did not lose much time in writing this letter?—I did not expect to be examined about it by this Committee.

2952. But surely it is of more consequence what the people of your diocese think of it than what we think of it?—Yes, in a certain sense it is, and it was in that sense that I wrote it.

2953. You describe in this pastoral letter the murder of a landlord, and you say, "Is it any rashness then to suppose that the bullet that pierced the mortal body has murdered for ever the immortal soul"?—Yes, I say that.

2954. Then you add, in another part of your pastoral letter, that it is with difficulty that you have brought yourself to speak such hard words of the Ribbon Society?—I accused them of being a confederacy associated for the diabolical purpose of murder. I thought that that was a strong expression to use, particularly for the reason which I have explained already, namely, that there was something like a prejudice in the minds of the people somewhat favourable to the Ribbonism of former days, and I wanted to soften down the asperity of saying that it was a society incorporated for the diabolical purpose of committing murder.

2955. Mr. *James.*] I understand you to say that the parish priests have made a certain report to you of the important events which have occurred under their cognisance; is that the regular practice?—Sometimes they do, but in this case I asked for it particularly by a circular which I sent to them.

2956. Are you aware of the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act from 1866 to 1869?—Yes, I am.

2957. Did you hear of anybody being arrested under that suspension, who was reported or supposed to be innocent of any connection with Fenianism?—Throughout the whole extent of the diocese, I do not think that there was any arrest made under the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act.

2958. I think that you are mistaken in that impression; but did you ever hear of any alleged injustice occur in the working of that Act?—I did not; I did not inquire.

2959. How do you think that the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act for crimes other than political crimes would be received by the well-affected people in your diocese?—I think that the people would be afraid that it might be abused, and particularly that the arrests which would be made under it would of course be made upon the recommendation of the landlords and of the magistrates, and people in that position: and I should think that even the well affected would be afraid that in many instances some of those gentlemen might abuse their power, or rather that from personal pique or prejudice, or from some other cause, might recommend an arrest under circumstances in which, from the facts of the case, they would not be justified in recommending it.

2960. Do you think that their knowledge that it was not abused from 1866 to 1869 would remove that impression from their minds?—I do not think that people considered much about the abuse of the Habeas Corpus Act in that case, or that it was thought much of at all in our part of the country, as I think there were so very few cases.

2961. Some of those notorious persons whom you spoke of, and of whom the Committee have previously heard, would be known, I assume, to the parish priests, would they not?—Yes.

2962. Would a parish priest, from information derived, not from confession, but from other sources than confession, assist in giving information upon this matter?—I do not know that he should do so; I think that he would lose influence very considerably with his flock.

2963. Would he lose considerable influence with his flock if he gave information about a well-known murderer?—In the case of such a man, he would reprimand him and denounce him.

2964. Do you mean in the chapel?—Yes; he would denounce him in the chapel.

2965. If he said, "This man is a murderer," in open chapel, that would be an intimation of which the police could take advantage, would it not?—They do not do exactly that.

2966. If it would be an advantage to all the well-regulated people of the community, why would he not give such information as I have suggested?—Because there would be the feeling in the minds of the people that he would be overstepping his duty.

2967. Do you believe that people would think so?—Yes, I think that they would, because they do not look upon him as an officer of justice, and I think he would render himself odious to his flock if he singled out any person and pointed him out to the authorities. They will bear any amount of reprimand from him as their priest, but I think he would be thought to be outstepping the functions of his office in assuming those of a police magistrate or of a policeman.

2967.* Now with reference to another point, has the

the rate of wages increased or decreased in the last four or five years, to your knowledge?—The rate of wages during a month in spring, and another month in harvest, has increased for those months.

2968. Mr. *Maguire.*] You were asked the question why a clergyman would not denounce some person of notorious character; is it not more for the general advantage that the clergyman should endeavour to prevent crime than turn himself into a detective or denunciator?—Certainly.

2969. And you have done so as far as you could?—Yes.

2970. You think it would be far better to leave the police authorities to do their own part?—Yes.

2971. Anything further than that would be attended with the most disastrous results, would it not?—I am certain it would.

2972. You have a thorough knowledge, I suppose, of the state of the country as regards the rural population?—I have information which I believe to be correct, but, as I said, derived of late days from the priests. Of course I have also that knowledge which I derive from my missionary visitation.

2973. During your missionary visitation, do you go from parish to parish?—Yes, I do.

2974. And do you attempt to make yourself acquainted with the ordinary current events?—Yes, I do.

2975. And you still think that the condition of the agricultural population is deplorable?—I think it is most deplorable.

2976. Can you make any suggestion to the Committee with reference to any possible improvement of that condition?—I have not thought upon that subject.

2977. At any rate their condition ought to be improved?—Undoubtedly, and particularly in the towns. The evicted tenantry, and the children of the evicted tenantry, in the towns, are a most inflammable material.

2978. They have nothing to lose?—They have nothing to lose, and it is so easy to act upon their feelings.

2979. Their minds are filled with the bitter memories and revengeful feelings of the past?—Yes, they are.

2980. You look to the operation of the Land Act as being likely to have a salutary effect upon the condition of the country?—Yes, I think so.

2981. Have you already found advantage resulting from it?—Yes.

2982. There is a growing feeling amongst the people that the law protects them?—Yes, there is a greater feeling of confidence. I may say that I see that some people to some extent attribute some of the recent outrages to a sort of excitement that has come over the people in consequence of having an exaggerated notion of the importance of having a little bit of land. One of my priests says: "I ascribe the most of these to the intense interest upon the subject of land prevailing last spring, and still prevailing, nor do I think that they were the result of any confederacy whatever;" that was with regard to some outrages that had just taken place.

2983. There was a general excitement in the public mind caused by the discussion of the question?—Yes, and by the increased value which the Land Bill was supposed to have given the land.

2984. There were exaggerated ideas in the minds of some people, who imagined that the law would reach every possible case?—Yes; even at present they believe that immense benefit has been conferred by it, and I think that it has.

2985. But when the people begin to know what the law really means, that it protects the tenants' property, but still that it will give no countenance to those extravagant demands, then the public mind will settle down; is not that your opinion?—I am sure that the Land Bill will have a most salutary effect. At the same time the people were disappointed, because they expected much more than they have got.

2986. With reference to the organisation of Fenianism; you do not believe that there is any central body in Manchester that controls all these evil-disposed people we have heard of?—I do not.

2987. You do not look to the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act as an effectual cure?—It might do good temporarily, but I think that permanent or lasting good will be done by enforcing the law vigorously and actively as it exists, and then holding out hopes for the improvement of the condition of the labourer.

2988. Are you of opinion that the police are an efficient body for suppressing or detecting crime?—I do not think that they are at present; and I have from different priests complaints of their inefficiency.

2989. To what cause do they attribute that inefficiency?—They attribute it to the indifference of the magistrates, which they think has a paralysing effect upon the police; but there is generally an impression, particularly among the priests, that the police are not so efficient as they might be.

2990. You are of opinion that by greater activity upon the part of the police, and greater zeal upon the part of the magistrates, the existing evil might be suppressed?—Yes, I think that it might be.

2991. Without going to what some persons might be inclined to consider unconstitutional measures?—I think so.

2992. Is there not something degrading in some people's minds in having the constitution suspended against their county or themselves?—Yes; I think that the same feeling exists against the Peace Preservation Act wherever the imposition of the penalty is confined to a limited area; the people there believe that they are punished, that there is a real punishment inflicted upon them, and that therefore the Government believes them to be in league with murderers and assassins, and they feel degraded in their own eyes in that very way.

2993. Now, with regard to one other point; you spoke of the crushing results of the taxation when it is concentrated upon one particular district, that is to say, where a large sum of money is raised from a small area?—I did.

2994. From your knowledge of your diocese, would it be, humanly speaking, possible to change the incidence of taxation, that is to say, not to impose the tax upon house and land, but upon house alone; would not that utterly annihilate the people?—First of all it would ruin the towns, and then all the country; so that the effect would be that there would be no taxation upon the district at all.

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2995. Would not that effect be so terrible, and the exasperation caused by it so great, that the result would be a greater evil than the tax itself?—Undoubtedly; because there would then be that partiality which, as many complain, and as I have heard upon excellent authority, has been already displayed in allocating this tax. For instance, there is a person whose name is Fox; an outrage had been committed upon his land, and he asked only 150 *l.* from the grand jury.

2996. The Committee have already heard of that case; can you mention any other?—Then there is the case of Moran in the King's County, in which case the whole indemnity fine is imposed upon one townland, upon one proprietor and his tenants, and I am told that the effect of it will be utterly to ruin that man; I do not see why it should not have been imposed upon other proprietors as well.

2997. Do you object to the power or the discretion exercised by the grand jury of putting any amount they pleased upon any locality?—Certainly I do; because I think that they go too far; I think that they are too much inclined to make the tax heavy.

2998. You mentioned one case where 800 *l.* were awarded as compensation; if you work that out, that is giving to a family 40 *l.* a year, that is, 16 *s.* a week, when the man never in his life earned more than 10 *s.* a week?—Yes: and when he was always liable to be discharged. Waters's case was still worse.

2999. Colonel *Wilson Patten.*] You have already stated to the Committee that the priesthood of Ireland have not the same knowledge of Ribbonism that they used to have; in your experience should you say that that was the case?—I think that they know the people as well as they ever knew them.

3000. In point of confession, have you found any difference in the confession generally made now from what it used to be?—I could not speak to anything concerning that subject.

3001. It has been stated that there was a greater difficulty at getting at facts; I wanted to know whether that arose from the absence of confession?—We could not use confession at all for that purpose, but we have numerous opportunities of visiting the people and of knowing what is going on.

3002. Do you think that you have, from your knowledge of Ribbonism, now the advantages which were possessed by the priesthood at the time which you alluded to in your charge?—I will qualify that by saying, that I think the priests know the people now as well as ever, and perhaps better, but I think that they do not know about Ribbonism so well now, because it does not exist.

3003. Mr. *Solicitor General for Ireland.*] Are you aware, at the present time, that the compensation awarded by the grand jury, and the police tax, are levied off the houses and lands of the farmers, according to their valuation?—I do not know the law at all.

3004. When you say that the farmers complain of the tax, you know that it is levied off the farmer's house and land?—Yes, off his holding.

3005. It has been suggested in this Committee room, by some of the witnesses, that it would be preferable to levy the tax off the house alone?—Then if a man had a farm in the district without houses upon it, although he derived a large income from it, he would not be taxed at all.

3006. Then you do not approve of levying it off the house alone?—Not at all.

3007. One of the witnesses approved of a plan of levying a poll tax on individuals; do you approve of that?—Of course I do not.

3008. It has been said by several witnesses before this Committee, that all the well-disposed people of Westmeath, King's County, and Meath, so far as they border on Westmeath, among the farmers and labourers, would be glad if the Habeas Corpus Act were suspended, as a remedy for this state of affairs; do you agree with that?—I do not believe it.

3009. Sir *G. Grey.*] You stated to the Committee that there was a feeling of degradation in the minds of the people in Westmeath, owing to the Peace Preservation Act being applicable to that county?—I did not mean to convey that idea exactly.

3010. You stated that there would be a feeling of degradation if the Habeas Corpus Act were suspended, and that there was also a feeling of degradation, owing to the action of the Peace Preservation Act?—In any district on which the penalty is actually inflicted. If an outrage is committed in any district, then a limited area, taking the place of that outrage as the centre, is taxed as an indemnity for that outrage. Then the people who live in that area, and who are thus taxed, feel degraded besides being ruined, because they assume that this punishment would not have been inflicted upon them by the Government unless they believed that they were *participes criminis.*

3011. But is there not a sense of indignity that such a number of outrages are committed to which they are not parties?—Yes, undoubtedly, after an outrage is committed, there is a feeling of horror in every man's face you meet.

3012. Would not they be glad if some effectual means were taken of preventing outrages, or of bringing the perpetrators of them to justice, whereas now they escape with impunity?—I believe so.

3013. You stated to the Committee that the condition of the peasantry in Westmeath was deplorable; is it worse than in other parts of your diocese?—I stated that it was not so bad as in Meath, because in Westmeath they have plenty of bog and plenty of turf and fuel, while they have none at all in Meath.

3014. Do you mean to say that the condition of the people in Westmeath is exceptionally deplorable, or only deplorable in common with the condition of the people in the surrounding dioceses?—I think in common with the state of the surrounding dioceses.

3015. *Chairman.*] As I understand, you have been making inquiries from your priests upon the subject of Ribbonism since you wrote this pastoral letter?—Yes.

3016. And I conclude that you have rather altered your opinion upon the subject?—No, I think not.

3017. When you wrote that pastoral letter, were not you under the impression that there was a secret Ribbon society similar to that which you have described as existing a long while ago?—No, I did not think that; I adopted that phraseology because I thought it was more convenient;

venient; but I had that understanding in my mind which I have explained to the Committee.

3018. You spoke of secret societies?—Yes, those are secret societies

3019. But a clique or knot, as you would now describe it, is not what you would generally call a secret society, is it?—It is secret to a certain extent, but I found that phraseology most convenient to use. There is a tendency, you may say, on the part of a great many parties in the diocese who belonged to Ribbon societies long ago; a certain demoralisation hanging over any person whoever belonged to any of these societies, which renders him more disposed to relapse into such societies, if the temptation is only opened to him. I was afraid that a great many of those parties I allude to would join those cliques, and I therefore wanted to caution my flocks especially against them, so I called them by that name.

3020. Do I understand you to deny that there is a great difficulty in obtaining evidence from any spectators or persons who are cognisant of an outrage?—I could not say that; I have no knowledge upon the subject, nor have I thought upon it.

3021. Have you not heard that the magistrates and police have great difficulty in obtaining any evidence to bring home to the guilty persons the commission of outrages?—Certainly.

3022. You have heard that they have a difficulty?—Certainly; they have great difficulty. I think I have explained already that this arises from the fact that those parties take very great care to commit these outrages under such circumstances as to render it almost impossible to carry home the guilt to them.

3023. Did you ever hear of the case of a farmer of the name of Fox, in the King's County, of the 30th October 1870?—I heard of the outrage on Fox.

3024. The return says, "Fox was met on his way to chapel at half-past seven o'clock a.m., by two men armed with pistols, who ordered him to place himself on his knees; he refused, when a struggle ensued, and one of the party fired at him, inflicting a serious wound on his chest; several persons were digging potatoes close by, but rendered no assistance. About 20 years ago, Fox took some land, from which a party named Donohue were evicted;" have you reason to believe that that is a correct account of what took place?—There are some very extraordinary circumstances connected with that case. Fox, I understand, was fired at on a Sunday; how could parties be digging potatoes on a Sunday?

3025. Do they never work in the fields on a Sunday morning?—I do not think that they do.

3026. You have heard of the circumstance?—I heard of the outrage, but I do not remember distinctly to have heard anything about the digging of potatoes. I understood that he was fired at on a Sunday on his way to Mass.

3027. From what you have just heard, do you believe that that account is true, or not?—I could give no opinion upon it, but it seems to me very strange, because Fox is a very respectable man, and is well looked upon in the neighbourhood; he had a brother a priest.

3028. Of course, from your knowledge of the people, you would suppose that if there were 15 men digging potatoes in an adjoining field, they would have come to the rescue of Fox, and have arrested the assassin?—If it had been known to them I would have been very much surprised if they had not done so. I remember to have heard that there was a son of Fox's not more than a very few paces from him at the time, and that he had a gun in his hand; and if it had been intimated to him that his father was being murdered, he would of course have come to his rescue; in the same way it may not have been intimated to them. As regards the general question, I would say that I should be greatly surprised if they did not run to the rescue of a man under such circumstances, particularly of a man who ought to be popular as Fox was.

3029. And do you think that they would not only come to the rescue of a man, but that they would give all the assistance they could towards the arrest of the assassin?—Yes.

3030. Sir *G. Grey.*] Is it usual for persons in the neighbourhood of an outrage to give assistance in arresting the perpetrator?—Yes; in the case of Supple, it was said that the outrage was committed near Raharney; and that as soon as he cried for help the whole of the village came out with torches, looking for the man wherever they could; that was stated in the court in Mullingar at the trial.

3031. *Chairman.*] Supposing it is true, as is often asserted, that the neighbours do not give any assistance in the detection of crime, is there not some justice in imposing the compensation tax or the police tax upon that district?—Certainly, because that is direct complicity with the crime; parties who could prevent the crime and who could arrest the assassin and refuse to do so, I think, being a *mutus non obstans*, render themselves responsible for the commission of the crime and should most justly be punished; but I do most firmly believe that that does not apply to any part of the county of Westmeath.

3032. With reference to your statement about the eviction on Mr. Boyd's estate, is it within your knowledge that the ground which was cleared was added to his demesnes?—I could not say positively, although I have travelled in that part of the country. I do not think it is part of his demesnes; it is in his hands; he occupies it.

3033. It is immediately joining his residence, is it not?—I happened to travel in that locality some time ago, but could not remember seeing Mr. Boyd's house; he occupies a large tract of land, and his house is somewhere in the centre.

3034. Do you know whether the tenants were evicted without compensation, or were they bought out or settled in other parts of his estate?—I am sure I do not know whether they were settled in other parts of his estate; I am quite certain multitudes of them were not; some may have been, but I never heard that; I am certain that multitudes were not, because I met many of them in Mullingar afterwards, and I saw many of them in the poor-house.

3035. Did they receive the value of their holdings?—I should think not.

3036. Have you inquired whether they did not?—I have not inquired because I thought it unnecessary. I think that, so long ago as when these evictions took place, there was no such thing as compensation at all.

3037. Was not it a very common thing for a landlord, wishing to improve his estate, to pay a certain sum to enable his tenants to settle some-

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where else?—I do not think it was a common practice at all; he might have given them a few pounds. In the case which I mentioned in my pastoral, the agent gave a few pounds.

3038. You do not know whether Mr. Boyd gave any compensation in this case?—I could not say that, but my belief was that he did not. I never had any doubt about it, although I never nquired particularly.

3039. Are you perfectly certain that he did not provide for them in some other way?—I am perfectly certain that he did not provide for vast multitudes of them in any other way. He may have for one or two for all I know; but I am perfectly certain that he did not provide for the vast bulk of them.

3040. Mr. *Bruen.*] You are speaking of the Old Road eviction?—Yes.

[The Witness withdrew.

Thursday, 30th March 1871.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. Bruen.
Mr. Disraeli.
Mr. Downing.
Mr. Chichester Fortescue.
Mr. Gregory.
Sir George Grey.
Mr. Russell Gurney.
Mr. Hardy.
Marquis of Hartington.
Mr. James.
Mr. Maguire.
Colonel Wilson Patten.
Mr. Pemberton.
Mr. Plunket.
Viscount Sandon.
Serjeant Sherlock.
Solicitor General for Ireland.

THE MARQUIS OF HARTINGTON, IN THE CHAIR.

Mr. JOSEPH HENRY LYTTELTON ROGERS, called in; and Examined.

Mr. *J. H. L. Rogers.* 30 March 1871.

3041. Mr. *Solicitor General for Ireland.*] You are a Resident Magistrate, I believe?—Yes, I am.

3042. Will you inform the Committee how long you have been a resident magistrate?—Since April 1860.

3043. Where are you stationed at present?—At Tullamore, in the King's County.

3044. How long have you been stationed at Tullamore?—Since the 30th April 1860. I have been stationed in the King's County since the time of my appointment to the magistracy.

3045. What is the size of your district?—My district is a very large one; it comprises the greater portion of King's County, and a great portion of the petty sessions district of Rathangan, in the county of Kildare, and a large part of the petty sessions district of Portarlington, in the Queen's County, because by reason of the Act of the 14th & 15th Victoria, enabling portions of one county to be attached to portions of another county, I am obliged to follow crime into these different places.

3046. Is the portion of King's County which is under your jurisdiction, next to Westmeath?—Yes; it is bordered by Westmeath and Meath. All the northern portion of King's County comprised in my district borders upon the counties of Meath and Westmeath.

3047. Is the barony of Kilcourcy in your district?—Yes, it is.

3048. I believe that the chief town in that barony is Clara?—Yes.

3049. What is the state of your district with reference to agrarian crime; I refer particularly to that portion of your district bordering upon Westmeath and Meath?—For some years the district has been in a satisfactory state.

3050. In your opinion, is it now in a better state, or in a worse state than it was formerly?—It has been in a worse state recently.

3051. How long has it been in what you call a worse state?—I should say about 13 or 14 months.

3052. Does Ribbonism prevail in the district adjoining Westmeath, that is under your jurisdiction?—The influences of Ribbonism, or the confederacy that is represented to be Ribbonism, certainly extends into my district.

3053. When you say extends into your district, am I to understand from that, that they come from some other place?—They come from Westmeath across the borders into that portion of King's County immediately adjoining Westmeath.

3054. Do Ribbonism or its influences exist in the rest of your district?—By no means, if I am to judge by its fruits, because we have scarcely any agrarian crime in the other portions, and certainly none of the results of organised combination.

3055. Do you believe that the organised combination or confederacy, which we know by the name of Ribbonism, prevails in a portion of your district adjoining Westmeath, or do its influences merely come in from Westmeath?—I believe that its influences are all that exist, and those influences can be readily traced by me on the spot; being obliged to make inquiries, I can trace the action of Westmeath upon my portion of King's County, which borders upon it, and it ceases at a certain place; there is a certain line of demarcation between the disturbed portions of King's County and the portions that are not disturbed, comparatively speaking.

3056. The portion disturbed lies towards Westmeath, does it not?—Yes, it does.

3057. Have you any knowledge of the county of Westmeath?—Yes, I have.

3058. Does Ribbonism prevail in the portion of Westmeath adjoining your district?—Yes; I do not know whether to term it Ribbonism.

3059. An illegal confederation?—Yes.

3060. It does exist there?—Yes.

3061. Do more than the influences of this illegal combination extend into King's County, or does the combination itself extend into King's County?—I am inclined to suppose that there are many persons by relationship or otherwise implicated to a certain extent with the confederacy existing in Westmeath, and that for their own purposes they can command the assistance of parties in the county of Westmeath. If required, I can give my reasons, and state exactly the cases in which I could trace that influence.

3062. Are you of opinion that there are people resident in your portion of the King's County adjoining Westmeath, who are connected with this

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this illegal combination?—I do believe there are some.

3063. And those people can command the assistance of others connected with the confederation across the borders from Westmeath?—Distinctly so.

3064. What in your opinion are the objects of this conspiracy or confederacy, so far as your districts are concerned?—I think that the objects of the confederacy are principally with respect to land; and I also think the society is not confined in its action to that alone, but that it often desires to interfere with labour, and with the employment of people connected with land; and I do not think that in its action it is confined to any class. It is alike directed against the landlord, the tenant, and the occupier of any description; the steward, the herds, and down to the labourer; and my reasons for saying that are, that I can adduce instances of its action being directed towards parties of the different classes I have spoken of.

3065. All those persons you have spoken of are more or less connected with land?—Yes.

3066. Do you believe that the conspiracy has any objects of a different nature from those connected with land; do you think that it interferes with trade?—I have known no instances of its interfering with trade; I have known threatening letters to be addressed to parties upon very absurd subjects, but I do not believe that they emanated from this confederacy.

3067. Have there been many instances of threatening letters in your district?—Yes.

3068. Lately?—Yes; there have been some lately.

3069. In your opinion, has the offence of sending threatening letters increased or decreased?—That offence has decreased in this respect, that some years ago the letters came from different quarters, and we could easily trace their origin to different sources from different localities, but lately they have been confined to one particular locality; and I believe that we are perfectly aware of the source from which a good many of them emanate; others come from a source we cannot trace.

3070. Do you find any difficulty in your district in tracing crime connected with land?—I do.

3071. Are there any railways in your district?—Yes; there is a railway running right through King's County, from one end to the other.

3072. Have you any knowledge or belief that this illegal combination interferes with the railway or canal, or anything of the kind?—Not the slightest in the world.

3073. Then, in your judgment, from information communicated to you, it is entirely connected in some shape or other with land?—I never knew that it had any other object in its action but what was entirely connected with land.

3074. And when it interferes with a person in any way, you think that it must be a case connected with land?—Yes, precisely so.

3075. Do you recollect the murder of Mr. Anketell?—Yes, I do.

3076. That was not in your district?—No.

3077. Assuming that that was connected with what is called Ribbonism, has any offence of that description taken place in your district?—No.

3078. Neither murder nor attempt to murder?—No, certainly not; the only murder that has taken place in my district was the murder of Dunne by a man and his sister, who were executed; and also the murder of Mr. Clutterbuck, an officer who was out fishing, by a drunken fellow, who was executed too; and then there was the murder of a woman by her husband, and he was executed. We have had several cases of manslaughter, but we can account for them.

3079. Have there been any cases of murder in your district within the last three or four years, in which the parties have not been brought to justice?—Certainly not.

3080. Have there been any attempts to murder?—Yes, two: there was the case of Fox, who was shot on a Sunday morning while going to chapel; and there was the case of Moran and his wife, who were shot at as they were going to chapel just in the same way; both cases coming across the border from Westmeath.

3081. You are of opinion that those were cases of agrarian crime?—Yes.

3082. And connected with this illegal combination?—Connected with this illegal combination.

3083. Now, to return to the question of evidence; have you any difficulty in procuring evidence?—I think I am very fortunate in the manner in which I procure evidence in King's County; I am assisted by many influences, and I have been very fortunate in that respect; King's County was in a very dangerous state when I went there; I was sent down by Lord Carlisle, specially promoted to do all I could to remedy the state of things then existing there, and I got great approbation from the Lord Lieutenant and from the Under Secretary at the time for the manner in which I performed my duties.

3084. Is the country, to your belief, in a more satisfactory state now than it was then?—Yes.

3085. Have you been able to get any evidence in Fox's case?—I could not possibly get any evidence in Fox's case.

3086. Could you get any evidence in Moran's case?—No; I got evidence in Fox's case sufficient to produce 15 delinquents, who were digging potatoes in trenches upon a Sabbath morning, and who saw the unhappy man fired at, and heard his screams for assistance, but who never never stirred hand or foot to take him from the ground where he was lying, wounded. I brought those men before the magistrates, and made them account for seeing the whole transaction.

3087. But they could not identify any person connected with the transaction?—They would not.

3088. They swore they could not?—They swore they could not.

3089. Did they give any reason for not giving evidence?—When I asked one of the men how it was possible he could see his fellow man shot and not assist him, he said, "Sir, I might be shot myself."

3090. I apprehend that that result was owing to the influences of terror and intimidation, that they were afraid to give evidence; is that your opinion?—Terror or sympathy are the causes; but very often, I think, sympathy has a great deal to do with it.

3091. Has terror anything to do with it?—I think it has.

3092. Do you think that in your present district, defined as you have told the Committee, the people of the King's County are prevented from

from giving evidence through terror?—I do believe that.

3093. Do you believe that there are people in the King's County who will not give evidence on account of sympathy with the crime?—I do believe that.

3094. And you believe that there are people who act under mixed motives?—I do believe that, distinctly.

3095. The Peace Preservation Act is in force in your district, is it not?—It is.

3096. Have you put the law in force?—I have. I recommended that a party of police should be immediately sent down in the case of Moran. I got them placed upon the spot, and I also recommended that Moran should seek for compensation for injury done to his wife, and both those suggestions were carried out.

3097. Has the Peace Preservation Act been vigorously carried out?—In my district it has. We closed the public-houses in Clara with very good effect.

3098. Was the Peace Preservation Act put in force for the taking up of suspicious characters?—Distinctly; but we had very few to take up, because they took very good care not to be out at night.

3099. Have you acted upon that part of the Act for summoning parties refusing to give evidence?—Yes, in the case of those parties who were digging potatoes when Fox was shot; the parties who saw this outrage on that morning were all summoned under the provision of the Act, for we had no power previous to its introduction.

3100. And they gave you evidence which you were obliged to accept as satisfactory, that they knew none of the men?—Yes. Some of the parties gave very satisfactory evidence, but there were some of the parties who told a great deal that they did not know to be the fact.

3101. That is your opinion?—Yes.

3102. Has that portion of the Act referring to compensation to persons injured been carried out?—Certainly; at the last assizes Fox got 150 *l.* The grand jury gave him 300 *l.*, but the judge overruled their decision, because he had only claimed 150 *l.*, and the judge considered that that should be the basis of their grant. Moran's wife got 200 *l.*, and but for the conduct of Moran, who was the most reticent person I ever met with, she would have obtained more; but on account of his reticence the grand jury refused to give him the money which he claimed, and only gave him 200 *l.*

3103. The grand jury thought that he knew more than he told?—I know for a fact that he knew who were the men who shot at him.

3104. Do you think that the application of the Peace Preservation Act has a good effect?—I think that it has had an important effect already; since the last assizes, we have had an utter absence of crime for the last six weeks.

3105. Is it your testimony that there has been an utter absence of crime for the last six weeks?—Of course there would be social crimes, which will occur anywhere, but of the class of crime which the Committee are considering, there has been a total absence.

3106. I believe that you were in the constabulary before you were appointed a resident magistrate?—Yes; I served for 20 years in the most disturbed districts in Ireland.

3107. In your opinion is the constabulary an efficient force for the purposes for which it was intended?—I think it is.

3108. Have you found the constabulary of use in detecting and preventing crime, and in punishing offenders, so far as their duty calls upon them to do so, in your district in King's County?—I have. I think that they are an admirable body.

3109. Have you heard that some objections have been raised to the constabulary on account of their being too much of a military force; that they are too well drilled?—I do not mind how well a man is drilled, provided he attends to his civil duties as a constable, and it is quite compatible with his being a highly drilled man that he may make a good policeman.

3110. Sir *G. Grey.*] And a good detective?—And a good detective. A good deal depends upon the aptitude of the man himself, and a great deal depends upon the antagonism he meets with on the part of the people amongst whom he is placed to discharge his duty.

3111. Mr. *Solicitor General for Ireland.*] Does he meet with that antagonism?—I think he does in some way.

3112. In your opinion, does not the drilling interfere with the efficiency of a man as a detective. Is he not more easily recognised?—No, I do not think that he need carry his military appearance about with him. A good detective, as I think, would have sense enough not to let the public know who he was by his walk or his tread. I think that the constabulary are exceedingly acute. I have known instances in which a detective has been in the same place with myself some weeks, and I never knew who he was, although I have been in the constabulary; and I could mention another case of a man being sent down to the county of Meath, and the constabulary of the town where he was located reported to the head constable that there was a very dangerous and suspicious looking man in a lodging-house constantly writing letters. The head constable went at once and interviewed him, and he then sent for the sub-inspector. The result was that the officer had the man brought up to the barracks, and the man said, "By this night's post I will report to Colonel Wood what you have done to me. I must leave the town, as you have exposed me completely. I am detective so-and-so, and I have met with nothing but harassing with you and your men watching me all the time I have been here"; and he was obliged to leave the town that night.

3113. When a detective is sent down to any district, is there any information given to the resident magistrate of the presence of that detective?—I have known instances of a detective being sent into a district not telling anyone, either the resident magistrate or anyone else, and very properly too. If he goes there he ought to be perfectly untrammelled; he ought not to be seen going to the magistrate's house, or having communications with any authority.

3114. Have any of those detectives been in your district?—Not latterly; but I had a very first-rate man, who is now dead; Serjeant Caerleon.

3115. Do you think that he was detected by the country people?—Yes; I know that he was known very well by a great many of them, and latterly, after he had detected so many crimes, it was absolutely necessary that he should be withdrawn, because they knew him, but they did not

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betray any animosity towards him; he was well received everywhere he went.

3116. You told the Committee that in your district the Peace Preservation Act had been put in force; do you think that there is any necessity in your district of King's County bordering upon Westmeath, for any measures beyond the law as it at present exists, to repress any confederacy now existing, or the influences of it which come across the border?—I do.

3117. What would you suggest as a remedy?—Founding my answer upon my impressions in the two cases which were influenced by the action of the confederacy which I have described, and which I believe to exist in Westmeath, and feeling what a scandal it was to public justice that these men should be discharged, when I, as a magistrate, after investigation, conscientiously arrived at the conclusion that I had the parties in custody who fired at the woman, but was compelled to discharge them, and to see about 120 ill-conducted villains go up to the train and cheer the fellows the first day they were remanded for the few days that I could remand them, as they were going off to prison, the same as though they had committed some really good act, I felt that it was necessary that something should be done to keep these men confined until everything was exhausted to procure evidence to send them for trial before the ordinary tribunals. I believe that Westmeath and my part of King's County, under those influences, is in that state that something should be done.

3118. What would you suggest should be done to remedy that state of things?—I would suggest that his Excellency should have the power of imprisoning persons who have been properly represented to him to have been the committers or the participators in the committal of a serious crime.

3119. For what length of time do you suggest that they should be imprisoned?—That would depend upon the prospect the constable or the magistrate engaged in dealing with the case would have of getting evidence.

3120. Would your object be to get these men apprehended and detained for the purpose of sending them before the tribunals of the country?—Yes, there should be a power of imprisoning them for an indefinite time for the purpose of procuring evidence to send them for trial.

3121. Would you suggest so sending them to prison in order to commit them for trial, or to remand them in order that evidence might be procured?—Exactly; I will explain the course of action. The case comes before the magistrates, and, having but slight evidence before them, they take upon themselves, as is usually the practice, to remand the parties for eight days, which is the most they can do by law. On the prisoner being brought up at the expiration of eight days, unless the Crown can produce further evidence, the magistrates are placed in a very awkward position. Although an application may be made for a further remand, yet, in fact, the case should be strengthened by some further evidence; it often happens that some further evidence can be procured, and the magistrate remands the prisoners for eight days more, but that does not very often occur, and if, at the end of that time, there is no further evidence to be procured the parties are sent adrift, as the magistrate would have no power to deal further with them.

3122. You suggest that a power should be given to the Lord Lieutenant, by his warrant, to confine those people in prison, one effect of which would be that time would be given to look for further evidence against the prisoner?—That is exactly my view; of course, I may be wrong.

3123. But what length of time would you suggest for their detention?—I should be very unwilling to suggest any length of time, because that would depend upon the gravity of the offence, the circumstances surrounding it, and the prospect of evidence being procured. It would be better to judge by these facts than to be bound by any pre-arranged definite time.

3124. Supposing that in the case of these 15 people you have alluded to, you had had the power of putting them, or any of them, in prison under this warrant, do you think that evidence would have been procured from them in that way?—I do not think it would have been procured from them.

3125. Do you think that it would be procured at all?—I think that it very often happens in Ireland, that when parties cognisant of facts connected with agrarian crime know that the prisoners are likely to get out, they shut up and tell nothing; but if they thought that those parties would be kept in custody for an indefinite time, such as I now allude to, many persons, either for their own purposes, that is to say, perhaps being desirous at the present moment of relieving themselves from the prospect of having to pay compensation, or perhaps, under influence of money, might come forward and tell things which they would be afraid to do if the parties were likely to be immediately at liberty.

3126. Have you any hope of getting evidence from the parties themselves who are put in prison; supposing you took six out of the 15 and put them into separate apartments in the same prison, do you not think it is likely that one of them would tell upon the others?—I think that it is possible, taking the case as an example; but you must remember that those 15 men did not commit the crime.

3127. But supposing that they knew who did?—That is assumed; I think it is quite possible that some of the 15 knew who the parties were who made their escape.

3128. *Chairman.*] Or could have given information which would have helped you in their discovery?—Yes, which would have thrown light upon the transaction: the slightest clue would have been of use to us.

3129. Mr. *Solicitor General for Ireland.*] What distance were those parties from the scene of the outrage when the outrage was committed?—About 300 yards, I should say.

3130. At all events, near enough to identify the people who committed the crime?—Quite near enough, if they knew who they were.

3131. With reference to the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, which has been referred to, do you imagine that there would be any advantage in suspending the Habeas Corpus Act, and putting in prison the parties who are the leaders of this organisation without their committing any definite offence, and keeping them in prison for an indefinite time?—That would be having a retrospective effect, going back to crimes which had been committed.

3132. Do you think that there would be any advantage in that?—I think that there are cases, possibly in Westmeath (I am not speaking of the King's

King's County), in which it would be advantageous.

3133. Supposing the police or the resident magistrates had reason to suspect, but have no legal evidence to commit, a particular individual, A. B., he being a leader among the Ribbonmen, do you think that there would be any advantage, under the Habeas Corpus Suspension Act, in taking up that man under the Lord Lieutenant's warrant, and confining him in gaol for an indefinite length of time, that is to say, so far as concerns securing the peace of the country, either in a permanent or a temporary manner?—I am quite certain his Excellency would use his power in a very careful manner, but it would require to be done with great discretion.

3134. Assuming it to be used with great discretion, what do you think would be the effect of it?—Assuming it to be used with great discretion, I think that it would have a great effect upon crime, although I do not think that you would have the actual parties who had committed a crime, or who thought that the power of the Act concentrated itself upon them. I know parties in Westmeath who are making preparations to start, and who are looking out for the operation of this Committee. I was at Kilfoylan, where Mrs. Moran was shot, and the serjeant in the hut told me that they were going into the town for newspapers to see the result of this Committee, because many of them were making preparations to leave.

3135. Therefore, you think that it would require great care before this warrant was issued?—I do, the greatest care, because his Excellency's power being put in force in a wrong direction, or without just cause, would do more harm than good.

3136. Have you any suggestion to make to the Committee, with reference to the mode in which these matters should be brought under the notice of the Executive Government, or with reference to the mode of inquiry, which should show that any particular individual was connected with Ribbonism?—Of course I have ideas of my own, but I am very unwilling to put them forward. I am not a very good authority.

3137. But as far as your opinion goes, the Committee would like you to express it. Upon what information do you think the Lord Lieutenant should act?—I think upon a satisfactory report from two or three magistrates; but if possible I would have three magistrates, and I would have one of them a paid magistrate, not that I desire at all to convey the idea that unpaid magistrates would not discharge their duty just as well, but it very often happens that the unpaid magistrates may not wish to put themselves forward in the manner that a paid magistrate is bound to do. A paid magistrate is bound to take every responsibility, which I make a practice of doing myself.

3138. Mr. *Disraeli.*] Have you had any communications with persons in authority upon the unsatisfactory state of Westmeath, and the portions of your district contiguous to it?—Recently?

3139. Within the last 15 months, which you have described as the period during which its state has worsened?—I have had no communication, except with the Castle in Dublin. I make no reports except to the Under Secretary, for the Lord Lieutenant's information; and I make no reports, except the state of the county demands it of me.

3140. Therefore you have conveyed to the authorities at the Castle pretty much what you have conveyed to the Committee?—I do not think I have. I merely make a detailed report of any occurrence, and then, as shortly as possible, recommend what I think is applicable to the case in point.

3141. Have you ever recommended, for example, that there should be some new legislation in consequence of these outrages?—Never.

3142. You have not thought it your duty to recommend a partial or local suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act?—Not at all. I considered it my duty to recommend nothing further than the application of the law as it exists, bearing upon the distinct case upon which it becomes my duty to report.

3143. I understand you to state that you have never reported generally upon the state of your district, but only specifically upon some particular outrage?—Just so.

3144. Mr. *Hardy.*] Do you generally sit alone, or do the unpaid magistrates sit with you?—The unpaid magistrates sit with me when it is their convenience; and if is not their convenience, it is my duty to carry out the necessary business.

3145. Is there generally a pretty good attendance at petty sessions?—Sometimes we have a pretty good attendance, and sometimes I sit entirely by myself.

3146. How many petty sessions do you attend?—About 20 every month.

3147. Into how many places are those petty sessions divided?—Tullamore, Clara, Ballycumber, Portarlington, Clonegown, Edenderry, Fahey, and Rathangan; there are nine different places altogether.

3148. Do you find very generally that the magistrates act cordially with you?—Yes, with the greatest cordiality. I have a document in my pocket, in which magistrates of the three counties sent forward to the Lord Lieutenant, without my knowing it, a testimony to the very satisfactory manner in which I have discharged my duties.

3149. Mr. *Bruen.*] I understand that you are on terms of very considerable intimacy with the magistrates of your district?—Yes, I am.

3150. Have you ever entertained any suspicion that relations of a friendly character existed between any one of the local magistrates and the Ribbon Society?—Never; such a thought never entered into my mind.

3151. Have you ever heard of such a suspicion or belief existing in the minds of the country people?—Never, in my three counties that I am speaking of now.

3152. I suppose that if such a wide spread belief did exist, it would surely come to your ears through the reports of the constabulary?—I should not be depending upon the constabulary at all for my information, as I get it from many other sources, and no such opinion could be expressed as regards the three counties I am connected with without my being perfectly aware of it. I never heard a breath of an insinuation to that effect.

3153. Mr. *Downing.*] As I understand you, although you believe that there is a confederacy, to some extent, existing in the King's County, or the portion of it next to Westmeath, you do not take upon yourself to say that that is a Ribbon conspiracy?—I do not.

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3154. You are not prepared to say to the Committee that you believe there is in existence, in your part of the King's County, a regular organised confederacy, having passwords, being bound by an oath, and acknowledging a common executive authority?—I cannot say that, from my own knowledge.

3155. I asked what was your belief?—My belief is that they must have some means of communicating with each other, and that they must have a thorough understanding, in order to enable them to convey their ideas to the distant localities, which they do.

3156. That is to say, that parties in Westmeath, who from some cause or other may wish to commit agrarian crime, will have the means of communicating with parties in the King's County, on whom they may call to commit the offence?—I have no doubt about it that they have some means of making themselves thoroughly understood one with another, but with reference to the existence of passwords, I have no knowledge upon that point.

3157. Have you been in Tipperary?—Yes, I have been there, and have served there.

3158. Were you there when the county was very much disturbed?—Not particularly, but I have been there on special duty.

3159. There have been many agrarian murders there, from time to time, have there not?—Yes.

3160. And crimes arising from questions connected with land?—Yes.

3161. But you never formed an idea of whether there was a Ribbon Society in Tipperary?—I do not profess to know anything about Tipperary. When I was there, my duties were of so specific a nature that it took me out of that line of inquiry. I was there upon questions connected with elections, and searching for arms, but I had nothing to do with the general crime of the county.

3162. You used this expression, that there were a good many threatening letters, many of which were on very absurd subjects?—I did.

3163. Will you explain to the Committee what you mean by "absurd subjects"?—I think it was a very absurd thing for an ex-head constable of the police to receive a very dangerous letter, threatening him with certain consequences if he did not give up a bed that he had taken from his sister the week before; and I think it was a very absurd thing for a girl in Liverpool to write a letter to a cess-payer to warn him not to interfere with her father, who intended to apply for compensation for a stack of hay that had been burnt.

3164. Have there been a good many of those absurd letters?—Yes.

3165. Are you aware that at one of the late spring assizes, in the case of a man who was prosecuted for receiving a threatening letter, it came out upon the trial that he wrote it himself; I do not know in what county that occurred, but do you know whether it did occur?—I think I saw something about it, but it did not occur in any of the counties that I have been connected with.

3166. Do you know Tara near Clara, where Fox was fired at?—Yes, it is within a mile of the town of Clara.

3167. Are you aware that there have been cases reported as agrarian crimes in your own county which, in your opinion, never occurred?—I could not exactly say agrarian crimes, but there have been cases represented as gross offences, and grave offences which turned out not to be based upon truth, but I do not think they were exactly represented as agrarian crimes.

3168. There have been grave cases reported which it turned out afterwards there was no foundation for?—Yes, and when they were investigated by myself and other magistrates they were proved to have been gross fabrications.

3169. Will you allow me to draw your attention to a case of which I have some recollection myself, because it occurred in this very district; do you remember a man of the name of Molloy having made a report that he was attacked at night, and that he shot one of the parties?—I do distinctly; it was I who investigated that case.

3170. He did make such a report as that, I believe?—Yes.

3171. Did he make any information?—*No*, he did not make any information.

3172. Did you go to the house?—I did.

3173. Will you be good enough to tell the Committee in what year that occurred?—*I* should say that it was in the year 1865.

3174. You have stated that you went to the house where Molloy resided?—Yes, decidedly, I went there for the purpose of examining the *locale*, in fact, making a species of *procès verbal*, and seeing how the surrounding appearance of the place fitted into the circumstances detailed.

3175. Did Molloy point out to you where he himself stood at the time?—Yes, he did.

3176. And did he point out to you where the parties were who attacked the house?—Yes, where they came into the room and where he took his gun up and discharged it, and shot a man who fell against the wall, and, recovering himself, rushed out of the room and made his escape.

3177. Did he point out to you anything upon the wall?—He pointed out where the shot struck, and where the blood from the wounded man was on the wall.

3178. Was that blood analysed or examined?—It did not require any analysis at all, because I brought out my pocket-handkerchief and took all the blood away, and it was red ruddle which is used for marking sheep. I called the woman of the house and examined her; the room was not touched, and I asked if she had swept the room, and she said what would she be sweeping the rooms for at that time, and still no shot could be found.

3179. What was the object of the man in making that report?—I could not tell you what his object was, if it was not to get arms for himself; when a county is proclaimed the licenses are granted upon the recommendation of the magistrates, and they are very particular in granting them, and his object, I have no doubt, was to get a license upon the ground that his life was in danger.

3180. Do you remember a case in which a man charged others with waylaying him upon the road returning from Mountmellick?—Yes.

3181. When did that occur?—In 1861.

3182. Did he make any information in writing?—He did, and he was prosecuted for perjury and acquitted; he represented that he was dangerously beaten on the way from Mountmellick.

3183. One word with regard to the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act; did I understand you to say that you would apply it in this way: that where parties were arrested upon suspicion of committing a crime, and against whom no evidence

dence was obtained to warrant a committal after a remand or two, you would have those parties, upon the warrant of the Lord Lieutenant, committed under the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act?—Yes, I should for that purpose; but I would not limit his Excellency's action to a case where a magisterial action had been previously put in force, and where there was a deficiency of evidence to send the prisoners before the legal tribunals.

3184. My question had reference to a case where no evidence was obtained to warrant the magistracy in committing for trial?—But I beg to say that his Excellency's action should not be confined to that specific case; his warrant might precede the action of the magistrates in some cases; but it would be upon a satisfactory report from the magistrates. Some one must report the name of the party, and so bring it under his Excellency's notice. I only suggest that that would be the course of action that I think would be the safest.

3185. And those parties that would be committed under the Lord Lieutenant's warrant, I understand you to say, you would confine, so that in the meantime evidence might be had to prosecute them for the offence?—Yes, before the regular ordinary tribunals.

3186. How long a time would you recommend that the parties should be detained under that warrant?—I have already answered that question, by saying that the circumstances surrounding each particular case should determine the length of time, and that, in my opinion, would be better than having any definite pre-arranged period fixed.

3187. Do you think it would be satisfactory to the public at large, and the most intelligent members of the community, that parties should first be brought before the magistrates, and that an investigation should take place, and that when no evidence was brought against them, they should be committed to gaol for, say six months, and that in the meantime evidence should be looked for as against those parties, and that they should be put upon their trial afterwards, for, perhaps, a capital offence?—Yes; I think that would be more satisfactory than having no investigation, and putting parties up, as was done during the Fenian disturbance; parties were put up, and the magistrates had nothing at all to do with that. I believe it is desirable that the power should be left to the magistrates to report in what cases that action should be taken.

3188. In your opinion, would it not be necessary to appoint a much larger number of resident magistrates than there are now?—I think it would not.

3189. Mr. *Plunket.*] You say that you do not think this system of Ribbonism prevails upon the Southern and Western Railway?—No, it does not.

3190. That is not the railway of which Mr. Cusack is the chairman?—No.

3191. In the last 18 months, you stated that this conspiracy had extended into King's County; I suppose you made reports of that from time to time to the Government of the country?—No, decidedly not, because it did not crop up in such a manner as to make its influence felt in the district, until the case of Moran and the case of Fox occurred; it then became my duty to account for the manner in which the offence was committed, and to state where I believed the parties came from, but without comment.

3192. How long is it since the first case arose?—They occurred in January 1871, and in December 1870, I think.

3193. And did you immediately report those cases?—I reported them at once, but I merely confined myself to the facts connected with the occurrence, and the measures adopted by me for the purpose of putting the constabulary in motion, and what I had done myself.

3194. Mr. *Maguire.*] You stated to the Committee that the threatening letters seemed to come from several districts some time since, but that now they were confined to one particular district?—Yes, that is so.

3195. Would it not be easier to trace the origin of those letters at the present moment than formerly?—That would require explanation.

3196. Will you inform the Committee what steps have been taken in order to discover an offence which now seems to be committed from one particular district. First of all, you stated that threatening letters used to come from several districts; that there were several centres, as it were, of this illegal conduct, and that now they all seemed to come from one particular part?—Yes.

3197. What steps have been taken to find out the perpetrators of this illegality?—

The Committee directed that the answer should be suppressed.

3198. Do I understand you to say that that party, without mentioning his name, who has written those letters, has written for the county of Westmeath as well as for the portion of King's County comprehended in our inquiry?—I have the strongest reasons to believe that that is so.

3199. He does it for all?—I think so.

3200. I gather from you that an active stipendiary magistrate has it in his power to do a vast deal of good towards the tranquillising of the district and the detection of crime?—I believe he has a good deal of power in his hands if he uses it wisely.

3201. And if he uses it vigorously?—Yes, and fearlessly.

3202. Then if one magistrate be able to do so much good, would it not be rather advantageous to the public interest that a number of magistrates should be sent down to a disturbed district. If instead of one you had six resident magistrates, and you gave each of them a small district, so as to concentrate their action, do you not think that good effects would arise from that?—I do not know that there would be such an immense deal of good arise from it.

3203. Supposing, for example, that your duties were entirely confined to that portion of King's County comprehended in our inquiry, and did not extend beyond that, do you not think that you would be able to do much more good than you are able to do now?—I think that I would be walking about half my time doing nothing. A magistrate's duties, though they may to a certain extent be like the duties of the police, yet they are duties which can be performed in a very much shorter space of time.

3204. Supposing there is a dangerous part of the country, would it not be better to divide that district among several active officers than to ask one man to do what is really too much for his time?

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time?—I do not think that any magistrate has too much to do as it is.

3205. And you would not recommend any additional magistrates to be sent down to this disturbed district?—There have been magistrates sent down already.

3206. But you would not recommend that any more should be sent down?—No; I think I would not.

3207. Allow me to ask whether, in your opinion, the addition of these magistrates to the force has done good service?—I think so.

3208. Then why should not a greater addition do more service?—My idea is, that the place is properly provided with magistrates, both locally and paid.

3209. Before that time, then, the Government thought it necessary to send down an additional number of resident or stipendiary magistrates (I am talking of the district where these crimes are said to exist); there did not seem to have been a sufficient number of resident magistrates?—That was for the former state of things; but when a worse state of things arose, the Government met the want by sending down an additional magistrate.

3210. The result was good, was it not?—Yes, it was.

3211. Then it was in consequence of that increase that good was done?—I am not quite sure about that.

3212. Do you say that it was not an advantage to have him sent down?—It is an advantage to have him sent down, because he can assist considerably in many districts. Cases arise in which the presence of a magistrate is necessary; and if they had to send for him to a great distance, that would be attended with inconvenience.

3213. Then would it not be a greater advantage if a greater number of magistrates were sent down to disturbed districts?—I do not think so. I have no way of judging of that except by my own district; my own district is disturbed, yet I do not want any more magistrates there.

3214. Would it not be better to adopt such moderate means as I suggested, than to effect your object by such means as suspending the constitution?—Westmeath has been so long in so unhappy a condition, and we have been so long looking on at the desperate crimes which have been committed there, without the possibility of bringing anyone to justice by reason of the reticence of the people and their antagonism to all law and order, that I think desperate measures should be had recourse to to cure such a frightful evil. I had a friend who was brutally shot dead in 1869, near Athlone, Captain Roland Tarleton, and his was one of many cases in which people have been made away with in a manner not to be heard of in almost any other country. That is the reason that I would recommend that desperate measures should be had recourse to to cure this frightful evil. I know the gravity of the recommendation as well as anyone.

3215. With reference to the constabulary and the use of detectives, you are positively certain that detectives may be sent down to a place without being discovered by either the authorities or the police?—I think they may, and I think that they have been; but on the other hand, I am quite sure that certain detectives may be sent into localities where they would be readily distinguished, and that might arise from many causes; it might arise from the inaptitude of the man selected, or from the fact of his being known to the local police; or he may not preserve the silence which he ought to do. He may also, by some means or other, be known to some man or other who had met him in his progress through the force.

3216. But is it not possible to have all these disadvantages neutralised by the selection of proper men?—No, that would only apply to my first remark.

3217. In the case of the man you mentioned, that was a man who had great aptitude for his profession?—Yes.

3218. And you mentioned another case, in which the police harassed a man because they did not suspect that he was a detective?—Yes.

3219. And why should not a number of this class of men be sent down to a disturbed district?—I think that the very best class of men that can be selected are selected.

3220. Would it not be well to send a larger number?—It might; but I am not sure that their efforts would be successful, because the people that I am now speaking of in Westmeath, and in the portion of King's County which is affected by the influences of Westmeath, are so determined to give no information upon any subject with regard to any offence having land for its origin, that no astuteness upon the part of any detective would procure any information.

3221. Notwithstanding that you recommend a desperate remedy for a desperate state of things, yet you express yourself conscious that a very great public evil would result from an act of indiscretion upon the part of the authorities?—I said more harm than good would be done. I think I did not say that great public evil would arise.

3222. Would not it, in reference to its effect upon the public mind, be a great evil, to have the Lord Lieutenant's warrant issued against a man, and to have that man put in prison for six or twelve months, if subsequently it was found that that charge was unfounded?—I think people are pretty much accustomed to that sort of thing. There are a great many cases where people are put into prison, and have to stay in for a great many months without being convicted. I know of a case of manslaughter at Tullamore, in which the wife swore to a man as being the man who murdered her husband. The man was put in prison, and the magistrates would not accept bail. He was subsequently tried and acquitted; his cousin committed the murder.

3223. You stated just now that people were so accustomed to be imprisoned?—No, I say that they are pretty well accustomed to see people taken up, and kept in custody for offences which they have been charged with, for which they are never tried, or if tried, are acquitted.

3224. I was speaking just now of the Lord Lieutenant's warrant, and in answer to a question put to you with reference to the exercise of those powers upon the part of the Lord Lieutenant, you said, as I understood you, that if those powers were indiscriminately exercised, or any wrong was committed under them, the result would be injurious to the administration of the law?—I said that it would have an injurious effect, and at the same time I said that I scarcely thought it would be possible that his Excellency's warrant could be put in execution except where there were very good grounds for its being done.

I say

I say that from what I know of his Excellency's application to business and everything else, for all my reports go before him, and he writes his minutes in his own hand, and reads every document that I send up to him.

3225. We are not inquiring into the character of the Lord Lieutenant. Is it your opinion that the head-quarters of this confederacy are in Manchester, or in Liverpool, or in some other large town in England?—I do not know anything about that at all. I have heard from men who have served in the police force in Liverpool that there were parties there who had direct communication with many persons in Ireland, but I do not know that of my own knowledge.

3226. Mr. *C. Fortescue.*] You spoke just now of what, in your opinion, constitutes a good policemen; would you not say that a constable might be a very good policeman without himself acting as a detective, but by showing activity and cleverness in obtaining from others information leading to the detection and conviction for crime?—I think he might be a very good policeman in that sense.

3227. It is not necessary in order to constitute a good policeman, that the constable himself should be a detective in all cases?—I think that the more he can combine the active policeman with the possession of detective qualities, the more nearly he approaches what I consider the perfection of a policeman.

3228. But cannot a great deal be done by a policeman in the way of obtaining private information, by laying himself out for it without acting as a detective?—Yes, and I think that a great deal of valuable information is got by policemen on many occasions who are not detectives, and who do not profess to be so.

3229. I believe the plan of closing public-houses has been adopted in part of your district, and has had a good effect?—Yes, it has.

3230. In what way has it had a good effect?—All the publicans are more or less connected with the people round about their various localities, either by ties of relationship or friendship, or in some way they are mixed up with them, and the closing of the public-houses seriously affects the revenues of the publican. For instance, during the period that the public-houses were closed, the losses were incalculable; some days the fair was held during the period of the closing; and whereas they formerly took large sums of money during the evening, after the fair was over, when the house was closed, of course all that source of revenue was taken away from them, and the publicans feeling that this engine could be made use of to repress crime, came to the conclusion that they would not allow parties to meet in their houses for the purpose of either concocting crime, or of being connected with it; so I learnt from the publicans at ———, two or three of whom had conversations with me upon the subject.

3231. Has the good effect been produced by preventing these persons from meeting to concoct their criminal plans in public-houses, or by making it the interest of the publicans to use their influence against the commission of crime?—The result is due to both means.

3232. You stated to the Committee that the other provision of the Act enabling the arrest of parties at night under suspicious circumstances, had not been much put in force, as the people would not go out at night; do you mean that since the passing of the Act, suspicious characters have taken care not to be out at night?—Certainly; I have had three cases before me of parties who had been out at night, who to the satisfaction of the magistrates who sat with me, and to my own satisfaction, showed themselves innocent of the charge, and they were discharged.

3233. I understand you to say now, that the Act of last year has had a very valuable and important effect?—A most important and valuable effect.

3234. Had you any knowledge of the action of the Lord Lieutenant under the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act during the Fenian times?—I had; but I had very little of Fenianism in my county.

3235. But have you any knowledge of the circumstances under which persons in your district were arrested under the Lord Lieutenant's warrant, and put in prison?—I have no knowledge of it beyond his Excellency's forwarding me power to discharge them on their giving me sufficient bail, and the result of my conversations with the parties who had been arrested and imprisoned.

3236. Are you satisfied that these arrests and imprisonments were, in every instance within your knowledge, properly made without any mistake, or did you ever know of a mistake being made, and of an innocent party being arrested under the Lord Lieutenant's warrant?—There is great difficulty in defining a Fenian, and great difficulty in finding out whether you are correct in your opinions with reference to them or not. There might have been parties put in prison for a very short time, but when their characters were testified to, they were very soon discharged.

3237. Are you aware of any case in which a person was detained beyond a very short time in prison upon such incorrect grounds?—No, I know of no such case.

3238. Do I understand you to recommend that the same powers that were then applied to the case of Fenian crimes should in this district be applied to the case of agrarian crimes, or crimes arising out of illegal combinations?—I recommend that the same powers should be conferred on the Lord Lieutenant.

3239. And that they should be exercised in the same way?—Yes, exercised in the same way. Anything which I have said with respect to my ideas of putting the case in a proper shape before his Excellency, in order that his warrant may issue, has been in answer to questions put to me.

3240. You do not mean that you would confine the exercise of the power to cases in which there was a probability of bringing the parties to trial?—I would not fetter his Excellency's discretion at all. I would allow his Excellency to use his own good sense in each case as it was brought before him.

3241. Sir *G. Grey.*] Did you find much difficulty in detecting these unfounded charges which you told the Committee of just now?—I did not.

3242. Do you believe that, beyond the exceptional cases you mentioned, the reports of the majority of the outrages are well founded?—I believe that they are mostly well founded. The police go with me upon the spot, and I investigate every case that comes under the name of outrage, and

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beg for the assistance of the local magistrates residing near the place.

3243. Have you any difficulty in detecting a report which is unfounded?—I think not.

3244. Do you think that the power of awarding compensation to the families of persons who have been murdered, or who have suffered outrages, has had a beneficial effect?—I think that it has had a beneficial operation upon the people round about me. The best way is to give an illustration of the feeling. A most respectable farmer, in conversation with me the other morning, in company with several other respectable farmers sending their stock up to Dublin, said, "Mr. Rogers, for a long time past we have allowed many things to pass round here, but after what occurred at the assizes the other day, it is rather too expensive to let crime run about here as it has done." I said that it was quite true, and I trust you will all be to a certain extent your own police; and if you will only do that way with a stranger or evil-doer when he comes amongst you, you will soon get rid of them."

3245. In Moran's case, Moran knew the person who had shot at him, and wounded him and his wife, and refused to give evidence which would lead to a conviction?—He did, and I will tell you my reason for arriving at that conclusion. Immediately after the occurrence took place, a serjeant went to his house, and on seeing the woman so badly wounded, he said, "Who did this?" "I do not know," said Moran. "You must give me an account of it, for the authorities will expect you to do so. Who am I to arrest?" He said, "Go and arrest Rabbitt and M'Donnell;" and immediately a constable went and arrested the parties, and when I went to the servant man in the house, and asked him if he could give me any information with reference to the parties, he turned round and said, "There is no use in asking me; go to my master, Mr. Moran; he knows all about it, if he chooses to tell you;" but Moran did not tell, and when the servant man was wanted the next week he had left the place.

3246. Do you believe that Moran wilfully obstructed the course of justice by withholding information which, if he had given, would have led to the conviction of the guilty parties?—He did.

3247. And, notwithstanding that, the man or his wife received a large sum of compensation?—Yes; his wife did.

3248. That was given notwithstanding that he had withheld information which would have convicted the parties?—Yes, the wife got the compensation. The claim was not allowed in order to gratify him, but to recoup the unfortunate woman for the terrible sufferings which she had undergone. The grand jury would have given 400 *l.* but for the reticence of the man Moran; the woman could give no information whatever because her head was turned away.

3249. But I suppose that the compensation was paid to her husband?—The husband would receive it when it was collected.

3250. Mr. Serjeant *Sherlock.*] Was not he the applicant?—The application was in his name, and it will be paid to him, as I say, when it is collected.

3251. Colonel *Wilson Patten.*] You stated to the Committee that only part of your district was in a disturbed state?—Yes.

3252. Supposing the law was altered for the greater repression of crime, would there be any difficulty in assigning definite limits within which that exceptional law should be administered?—There would be no difficulty whatever, because the limit is already defined by the specially proclaimed district, drawing a complete line between the part affected and the part unaffected.

3253. So that you would have no difficulty in drawing a line between the parts which are affected and those which are unaffected?—No difficulty whatever.

3254. Would you do it by baronies?—Yes; the Barony of Kilcourcy is the principal portion affected.

3255. That is a very small portion of the King's County, is it not?—It is a very small portion.

3256. Does that include the whole of the district which adjoins Westmeath, or only a portion of the district?—Every place affected is touched upon by Westmeath, and, to a certain extent, southwards, but not very far.

3257. *Chairman.*] In the case of Moran you arrested certain parties?—Yes, we did.

3258. And you believe that you got hold of the right persons?—I think so.

3259. Were they strangers or people from the district?—People from the townland; nephews of the man who owned the land that Moran bought, and which, I believe, he promised to give up on the return of the man to America. He gave so much money for it for a certain number of years.

3260. That was an agrarian, but scarcely a Ribbon outrage?—It was an agrarian outrage essentially.

3261. But it had not all the characteristics of a Ribbon outrage, had it?—It had in this respect, that possibly there was a good deal of the planning done of Westmeath.

3262. Is it not generally believed that a Ribbon outrage proper is generally perpetrated by some stranger brought from a distance?—Yes.

3263. But that was not the case in this instance?—No, not in Moran's case, but in Fox's case it was so.

3264. In Fox's case it was done by strangers, was it not?—It was done by parties from Westmeath. We ran them to the borders of Westmeath and lost them upon the red bog.

3265. You believe the deed was done by people who were not personally interested in the matter at all?—Donohue, the man who coveted the ground of Fox, who was the possessor for 20 years, is married to a woman from Castletown, in Westmeath, and from that influence he procured two men from Castletown to come and do the deed; and they ran back into the county of Westmeath immediately they had accomplished it.

3266. But the men who did the deed were not personally interested in the case?—Probably not. I am quite sure that they were not interested in it. It is the duty of members of the society to help those parties who require their assistance, and that is the meaning of the confederacy, the existence of which I have endeavoured to explain.

[The Witness withdrew.

Mr. GEORGE AUGUSTUS ROCHFORT-BOYD, called in; and further Examined.

3267. Mr. *Plunket.*] BISHOP NULTY, in his evidence on Monday, alluded to you as having evicted 186 people in 1850 or 1860, and he afterwards stated that a vast multitude of those people got no compensation; that eviction was known as the Old Road eviction. Will you tell the Committee the circumstances under which these evictions, such as they were, upon the Old Road Estate took place?—What is recognised as the Old Road Estate will not be found upon the Ordnance Survey; but I know what is meant by it perfectly well. It was an estate which lay into Middleton Park, belonging to the Knight of Kerry, upon which my labourers were chiefly located, in a very wretched and impoverished condition. In the year 1857 it came into the market. I purchased it very much for the purpose of improving the condition of the labourers, almost all of whom were my workmen. I found on the estate that, between farmers and labourers, there were 52 tenants.

3268. Did you find it necessary to rearrange the holdings on the estate?—It was quite impossible to do anything with the estate unless it was rearranged, and I employed a very competent man for squaring the farms and rearranging the property.

3269. How many of those 52 tenants were obliged to leave the land in consequence of this rearrangement?—I divided the land into 24 farms by his advice, and erected nine slated houses for cottiers; this left 19 cottiers and tenants for whom no land could be found, so to speak.

3270. And did you offer compensation to any of these 19?—I never put a man off my estate in my life who owed no arrears, save two or three, without offering him full compensation.

3271. Did they accept it?—Nine accepted it with gratitude; 10 there were who rejected all compensation, and refused on any terms to allow their particular holdings to be rearranged in any way.

3272. Do you know what has become of these 10 people since, or of any of them?—I do.

3273. Are any of them living in your neighbourhood?—Yes.

3274. How many?—There is one man who held land upon the estate, but who never resided upon my property, and he still lives where he always lived. On the Castledown estate, as it is called, belonging to Mr. Malone, near me, there are three or four residents, I think, with whom I am upon good terms.

3275. That leaves four men remaining?—That leaves five men remaining.

3276. What do you say about them?—They were men to whom I could not give land, because the general impression was that they were not men of good conduct, and would be likely to cause disturbance. I did not give them land; I was willing to give them money, but they would not take it.

3277. Do you suspect or believe that any of those four men belonged to the Ribbon conspiracy?—I did.

3278. The bishop said that, besides this eviction of 186 persons, you carried out several other evictions in other parishes; is that true?—I own two of the adjoining parishes, with the exception of one or two townlands in each, and I know nothing of any evictions in the neighbouring parishes that he speaks of, and it could not have taken place without my knowledge.

3279. How many evictions have you had over the whole of your estate, comprising, I believe, 11,000 acres, in the last 12 years?—My estate in Westmeath covers 13,000 acres, and I have had but two individual evictions in the last 11 years; the reason why I say "individual" is, that one ejectment might cover, as I understand, any number of persons, but I speak of two individual cases.

3280. Is it true that, while carrying on your evictions, you have had a band of Ribbonmen to protect you?—No, I have not had a band of Ribbonmen to protect me, nor did I ever allow a Ribbonman to approach me in any way. I have stood up face to face against the Ribbonmen.

3281. The bishop said, "Mr. Boyd, I think, has contributed very much to the discomfort of the labourers in this district, because he has put them nearly all out; I have met, myself, in the parish of Mullingar, a great many persons who were labourers and farmers upon Mr. Boyd's estate, and whom he evicted, and who entertained very unkind feelings towards him;" have you put out a number of labourers?—I never parted willingly with a labourer in my life who would do his work properly. We want labourers in the country. I am one of those who think that emigration has gone too far; but I cannot prevent them, when they get wealthy in my employment by getting good wages, from going elsewhere. My work is a sort of school for labour; they improve wonderfully in the quality of their labour after a short time. They get to be gardeners, and so on; and in America, for instance, they get to a point above that of a labourer altogether.

3282. The bishop, in explaining his grounds for saying that you had thus evicted multitudes, said: "I am sure I do not know whether they were settled in other parts of his estate; I am quite certain multitudes of them were not; some may have been, but I never heard that; I am certain that multitudes were not, because I met many of them in Mullingar afterwards, and I saw many of them in the poorhouse"?—My answer to that accusation is this. When I heard that so fearful an assertion was made here, I telegraphed to the clerk of the union of Mullingar—I gave him four years, which would cover all the period about that time—"From 1859 to 1864 have you had any paupers from my electoral division in Mullingar?" and the answer that has come this morning to me is this: "From 1859 to 1862 inclusive, no paupers from Middleton," that is the name of the electoral division; "in 1863 there was one." I knew there was no use in giving him too many years, for he could not answer me in the time; that covers four years of the period the bishop refers to.

3283. Mr. *Downing.*] Will you be good enough to state in what parish this property is situate that is called the Old Road?—It is in the parish of Castletown.

3284. And is that in the electoral division of Middleton?—Yes; but the village of Castletown itself

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itself is not in the division, and I have nothing to do with it.

3285. When you purchased that property, which you said belonged to the Knight of Kerry, you got a printed rental, did you not?—I presume I got a printed rental.

3286. Could you name to me any of those tenants who were in possession when you purchased, who are still upon the land?—I can tell you them; all parties of the name of Claffy, save one. You will find a number of Claffys on this map; these are now in possession upon the old road estate. Edward Claffy holds 86 acres in Ballybrennan; his house was raised and slated. For each of those I slated houses. Patrick Claffy holds 83 acres, John Claffy, Marcella Claffy (she is a widow), Michael Looram, Michael Macdermot, William Looram, Gilbert Carey, Martin Cowley, John Daly, Peter Follam; those are all upon one townland. I can go over the whole of them in that way off the map, if the Committee wish.

3287. Have you property in the parish of Ballymore?—Yes.

3288. Were there some tenants upon that property who are not upon it now?—I should say that there has hardly been a change upon the estates in the Ballymore parish for 20 years.

3289. Were the tenants who were in possession before 20 years ago evicted?—No; the fact connected with the estate is this. A middleman's lease fell out, and from another leasehold which he held before the expiration of the lease under me, he had transferred to my estate a considerable number of people to locate them there; that was just before the lease fell out.

3290. And they were evicted?—No, they were not evicted; I did the best I could for them; I said they were hardly answerable for this, and I made land there also for all that I could, and they are now a flourishing tenantry.

3291. Do you mean to represent to the Committee that none of these people were evicted?—No; I mean to say that certain men who were put in upon a bog at the end of the place, were with others bought out by my agent about 24 or 25 years ago, and I very well remember that some came back and roofed the houses again, and my agent refused to buy them out a second time.

3292. Were they then evicted?—They were then evicted, but they had received money to go out before that time.

3293. In what division is that?—In Umma.

3294. Is that in the Mullingar Union?—No, in the Athlone Union.

3295. Have you property in the parishes of Rochfort Bridge and Milltown?—Yes.

3296. Were there 300, or any number approaching 300, evicted from this townland?—Never. We have never had any evictions for 20 years, or more, I think; we had changes of tenancies, but they were not evictions.

3297. What do you mean to say by that. Do you mean to say that the tenants were merely moved from one portion of the townland to the other?—Exactly, so far as I know or am concerned.

3298. And that none were evicted?—I could not say that none were. I could not say that for 20 years there have not been any changes upon this estate, but I think not.

3299. Could you give the Committee any of the changes that have taken place?—All I have in Rochfort Bridge is in the hands of a middleman, and I have no control over the estate, therefore I pass over that altogether. Then I come to Milltown; that may be in the Roman Catholic parish of Rochfort Bridge, but in the legal parish of Enniscoffy. In that case, wherever the tenants have had their farms squared, we have done the best we could. I have encouraged the labourers in every way that I could; I have given them plots upon the skirts of the cutaway bog. I located them there because I think there are too few labourers in the district.

3300. I thought, when you were asked a question about the Old Road property, you told the Committee that you added that to your demesne?—I added a portion of it.

3301. You did not say to what extent?—I dare say that there were taken into the demesne, in 1859, and for other purposes connected with the farms, probably 80 or 90 acres, Irish.

3302. Not more?—No, not more, out of, I think, 1,000 statute acres, which is about the acreage of the estate.

3303. There was an old road which ran through that property when you purchased it?—Yes.

3304. Which road you got stopped by presentment?—There was a new road made higher up the hill, and the old road was stopped.

3305. As regards those 80 or 90 acres which you have added to your demesne, there is no person resident upon that portion?—No, but it does not follow that they are off the property.

3306. Can you state to the Committee whether some persons from the other properties that I have just mentioned, the parish of Ballymore and the united parishes of Rochfort Bridge and Milltown, have not entered the workhouse?—I believe there never has been a pauper in the Athlone workhouse, from my estate in that union. My estates do not send paupers into the house. We have no paupers, and we have no rates, except the house rates.

3307. Had you the protection of the police for a number of years?—Yes, I had.

3308. Will you state to the Committee for how many?—I dare say four or five, or possibly six years, after I evicted the Daly's who are upon that list, in which, as I told you, there were nine people evicted who would take no compensation, but who depended upon Ribbonism to remain upon the estate.

3309. And during that time you travelled, with the police attending you?—Yes.

3310. And you carried arms?—Yes, and my servants also.

3311. During that period had you reason to believe that there was an intention, and, in fact, a conspiracy to take your life?—Yes, the Ribbonmen have been always looking after me, more or less.

3312. Will you be good enough to state to the Committee when it was that you dispensed with the protection of the police?—I have had no regular police protection these four or five years.

3313. Try and be accurate upon that point; does the absence of police protection go beyond the year 1869?—I have no recollection of having had any regular police protection for four or five years.

3314. Have you any reason to believe that you had, whether knowingly or not, persons in your employ who were supposed to be Ribbonmen, or

who

who were connected with the confederacy?—I would not keep any man for one moment in my employment that I had even a well-grounded suspicion against.

3315. You would not give him employment?—Certainly not; and I would not keep him in my employment if I suspected it.

3316. You stated that you knew, in your own district, the heads of that confederacy?—Yes.

3317. How is it that you have acquired that information?—From time to time by information of all sorts; we have collected a good deal, but of late years, I am sorry to say, our information is getting less and less. I can name the heads of the confederacy, if the Committee wish.

3318. Mr. *Bruen.*] You have been charged with having a few years ago razed to the ground houses which sheltered 300 human beings; is there any foundation for such a charge?—Have I been charged with it?

3319. Yes; it is Question 2872. I asked the Bishop this question: "In the early part of your pastoral you speak of an extensive clearance, where the same proprietor you had previously referred to, 'desolated in an adjoining parish, a densely populated district, by batches of so many families, in each a series of successive clearances.' Was that a long time ago?—I have already said that I could not say when it happened, I should think that it was in 1850 or 1860." That connects that charge with the previous charge mentioned in Question 2757, in which he says that the date of 1850 or 1860, in a letter which he has, is illegible. "I think it is 1850." "186 people were evicted upon that occasion. I remember that those evictions were called the Old Road evictions;" that clearly connects the charge in the Bishop's pastoral with you; and I ask you whether you can account for that charge being made; have you ever razed to the ground houses which sheltered 300 human beings?—No; but I have read the Bishop's pastoral carefully, and I do not think that it refers to the same party. At any rate, if it means me, it is not true.

Mr. *G. A. Rochfort-Boyd.*

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3320. Mr. *James.*] You spoke of two individual evictions during 12 years, which I presume were of some leaseholders; can you tell the Committee the number of persons evicted in those two evictions?—One was a man in Tyrrell's Pass. We were obliged to apply to the sheriff to get legal possession; my legal advisers thought that it was the only way to get back possession for non-payment of rent; he had no children. The other man was one of three copartners in a lease; he had worried the lives out of the other two copartners during the tenancy, and he was also a great worry to myself, as he would not allow me to improve their farms, and when the lease was out, the others said they would not stop if he remained, so I thought it best to get rid of him.

Mr. NORMAN LIONEL TOWNSEND, called in; and Examined.

3321. *Chairman.*] YOU are a Sub-inspector of Constabulary, I believe?—Yes, I am.

3322. In what district?—In Kilbeggan, in the county of Westmeath.

3323. How long have you been there?—Two years next May.

3324. Since you have been at Kilbeggan, have what are known as agrarian or Ribbon outrages been frequent?—Yes, they have.

3325. Whenever a Ribbon or agrarian outrage comes to your knowledge you make a special report of it?—Yes, I do.

3326. Will you tell the Committee what you do, and what it is your duty to do, as soon as one of these outrages becomes known to you?—I immediately visit the scene and make all inquiries, and try to find out, if possible, the perpetrators of the outrage, and report to the Castle.

3327. Do you go by yourself, or are you accompanied by a police force?—I am accompanied by a police force; we bring out extra men to the place.

3328. Do you examine the person who is said to have been injured?—Yes, and all others who can give any information.

3329. Do you often succeed in obtaining any information?—Sometimes; sometimes they are very reluctant to tell you anything.

3330. Have you found a great indisposition to assist the police in such cases?—In many cases there is that; I ascribe that to fear.

3331. In what way does the information of such outrages generally reach you in the first instance?—If it is a serious case, the constabulary of the nearest station take a car and come over and let me know.

3332. But I mean in what way does it first come to the knowledge of the constabulary?—In some cases the injured parties report it themselves, and in other cases we hear it by chance; it may be four or five days afterwards.

Mr. *N. L. Townsend.*

3333. Does it frequently happen that the outrage is not reported by the injured person?—It does, especially in cases of threatening letters.

3334. Then how does it come to the knowledge of the constabulary?—It gets talked about amongst the neighbours.

3335. And the police then proceed to the place and make inquiries?—They do.

3336. And have you reason to suppose that the threatened person often denies all knowledge of the occurrence?—I have known some cases where I believe they did so.

3337. Will you tell the Committee in what way the constabulary are ordinarily employed; what is your system of patrolling?—There are day patrols and night patrols; they go out at different hours every day and night. At night there are generally from three to four men where the station is strong enough to afford such a number, and they proceed together, not keeping anything like in step, but one going may be 10 or 20 yards before the other, and they separate across the road and lie in wait at different places to listen if they can hear anyone coming.

3338. Do they go in the same directions every day?—No, they go in different directions at different hours, except in certain cases. Where we give protection to any parties, we generally visit that locality every day.

3339. Have you any reason to suppose that the movements of the constabulary are always watched?—They very often are perfectly well known.

Mr. *N. L. Townsend.*

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3340. You are the head authority in a certain district, are you not?—Yes.

3341. Not for the whole county?—No.

3342. Mr. Heath is the county inspector, is he not?—Yes, he is the county inspector.

3343. And you are sub-inspector?—I am one of seven sub-inspectors in the county.

3344. What is the force under your orders?—I have 79 men.

3345. And how many stations?—I have three protection posts, and leaving them out of the question, I have got nine.

3346. Has the force in your district been increased during the two years you have been there?—It has.

3347. By special stations?—There are two special stations.

3348. What steps have been taken since the passing of the Peace Preservation Act by the constabulary to carry out its provisions?—Any person out at night, not giving a satisfactory account of himself, is arrested and brought in.

3349. Have many arrests been made under the section relating to persons found out at night?—Yes, there have been a great many arrests in the district; 25, I should say.

3350. Have many convictions been obtained?—None in my district.

3351. Sir *G. Grey.*] Have the persons arrested been discharged by the magistrates?—There were two men convicted at Kilbeggan; but they were not arrested in my district, but I sent word to a station about them, and they were arrested out of my district.

3352. *Chairman.*] Those arrested in your district have not been convicted?—No, they have not.

3353. Do you know for what reason?—Because the magistrates could not agree upon what were the suspicious circumstances; it was very difficult to define what the suspicious circumstance were.

3354. The parties could always give some account of themselves?—Yes, they give an account that they are returning from a fair, or returning from seeing a friend, or from having been out drinking.

3355. Do you ever obtain information which enables you to prevent the commission of an outrage?—I do.

3356. There was one instance, I believe, in which you made an arrest, and then subsequently obtained a conviction?—Yes.

3357. Will you tell the Committee what that case was?—On the evening of the 24th of November last, I got information that a party of men were then visiting the houses of two farmers, and threatening them about some land. It was too late to go to their houses then, as they were two miles away; but I was told that if I went to a small footbridge across the river, I would meet them there. I went to the bridge, and I did meet them there, and called upon them to stand, when they fired upon one of my men, and my men fired upon them, and I arrested the leader myself.

3358. You intended to arrest them for being out at night?—Yes

3359. But in consequence of their firing at you, you arrested them upon a more serious charge?—Yes; under the Whiteboy Act.

3360. That man was convicted?—Yes, and he got seven years penal servitude.

3361. He was convicted upon your evidence?—Yes, and upon that of the three constables with me.

3362. No assistance, in the way of evidence, was required from the people?—The farmers were examined to prove that a party did visit their houses.

3363. Did they identify the man whom you arrested?—No; they said that they could not identify him. I sent a car on afterwards to a neighbouring district, and two men were arrested returning to their homes, who I have reason to believe were of the party, and they got three months each, under the 23rd section. Those are the cases I referred to before.

3364. You had no doubt that the party to whom the man you arrested belonged were out upon Ribbon business?—I am aware from private information that they were the persons who threatened the farmers about the land.

3365. Several witnesses have told the Committee that, in their opinion, the military organisation of the police force interferes with its efficiency for the detection of crime; have you formed any opinion upon that point?—As far as I can say, I do not think that it does.

3366. Are the constabulary, so far as you know, in constant and confidential communication with the people?—They are.

3367. When they are not actually upon duty they mix with the people?—They do in a great measure.

3368. And they do in some cases obtain information?—In some cases.

3369. You do not think that any change in the military character of their organisation, or in the system under which they are organised, would enable them to get more information?—I do not.

3370. Is a great deal of time taken up with drill?—No.

3371. Nor in routine duties?—The ordinary patrols are the chief duty, night and day.

3372. Besides the ordinary force of men in your district, have you had any detectives in your district?—Not to my knowledge.

3373. You would not be consulted about the detectives?—I do not know whether I should or not.

3374. Since you have been at Kilbeggan there have been several very serious offences committed there, have there not?—Yes; one murder, six firing at the person, 12 intimidations, 41 threatening letters, one serious assault, and nine cases of injury to property.

3375. But you do not know whether, in consequence of these outrages, any detectives have been sent down?—I do not.

3376. Have the offenders in any of these cases which you have just mentioned been brought to justice?—No.

Colonel Sir JOHN STEWART-WOOD, K.C.B., called in; and Examined.

3377. *Chairman.*] You are, I believe, the Head of the Constabulary Force in Ireland?—I am.

3378. How long have you occupied that position?—Five years and ten months.

3379. Were you previously in the army?—I was, for 30 years of my life.

3380. Your connection with the constabulary began in 1860, I believe?—On the 6th of August 1860, as deputy inspector general.

3381. And you then became inspector general?—I became inspector general on the 9th of May 1865.

3382. Several witnesses have told the Committee that, in their opinion, the peculiar organisation of the Irish constabulary renders it less efficient than it might be under some other system for the detection of crime of an agrarian or Ribbon character; what is your opinion with respect to that?—I beg entirely to disagree with them.

3383. We will first speak of the ordinary police force; does their military training, in your opinion, detract from their efficiency?—Certainly not; but I can tell you what does; there are two things. The military training of the constabulary would impress Members of this honourable Committee with the idea that they are nothing but soldiers; but I should like them to go into any of the 1,575 barracks in the country and see what the men know about detective or police duties.

3384. We will confine ourselves to the police duties; do the police succeed in getting any information of intended crime?—By friendly intercourse with the people we get some information, but not so much as we ought. I have represented most strongly to the Government that there are two things which militate against that; one thing is, that a duty is imposed upon them which is not imposed upon any police force in the world; I allude to the road nuisances. They have to look after the road nuisances, and pigs straying on the road, and that sort of thing, which makes the people of the country very inimical to them. Another thing which makes the people inimical to them is the dog tax.

3385. Have they to collect the dog tax?—The police have to enforce the payment of the tax; and they have to see that the dogs are logged, and so on; and these things annoy the peasantry of Ireland.

3386. You speak of the road nuisances; what are their duties in connection with the road nuisances?—If they see a pig wandering on the road, or cattle straying about, if they know the owners of them, their duty is to summon them, and if they do not, they are to impound the cattle, and of course the people are always upon the watch for the police. I have just come off an inspection; I travel about 1,500 or 1,600 miles upon an outside car every year, and I know very well the feelings of the people; they are told me by the police; they say it is one of the very worst things that ever was imposed upon the force.

3387. How long have these things been imposed upon the force?—The dog tax, I think, came on in 1867 or 1868, that is since I came into the constabulary; the road nuisance was imposed, I believe, when the police were first raised.

3388. In your opinion, those two duties have the effect of making the police unpopular?—Certainly.

3389. Is it the duty of the police to collect the dog tax, or merely to give information in cases in which it has not been paid?—To find out where it has not been paid, and in certain cases where dogs have not been logged, it is their duty to report the owners of those dogs, because they are not properly logged.

3390. Could those duties be conveniently entrusted to any one else?—Certainly. I should have thought that the road contractor could have looked after the pigs better than the police.

3391. And with reference to the dogs?—I cannot see how that is to be thoroughly done, except it is performed by the excise officers; but certainly the road nuisances are the worst duty the men have to perform.

3392. You have told the Committee what you think does deter from the efficiency of the police; in your opinion their military training does not?—Certainly not; their military training is nothing.

3393. In what way is it nothing?—They have not the setting up drill that they used to have; I have altered the system since I have been inspector general. People talk, of course, but it is not right for them to know what the present system is; but let me say that if any of those young men show an aptitude for detection, they are not sent to the setting up drill at all.

3394. But, speaking of the ordinary force, what is the system adopted?—The ordinary force goes through the routine drill in the depôt, and then they are sent to the stations.

3395. Are they instructed to mix as much as possible in a friendly manner with the people, and to obtain information?—There is not a police barrack that I inspect without always impressing upon their minds that the more they are out of their barracks the better, and the more they are in friendly intercourse with the people the better.

3396. In ordinary districts in Ireland, is it the fact that they do mix with the people, and do obtain information?—Yes, generally. So far as mixing with the people goes, they are not in the same friendly relations with the people as they would be, if they had not the obnoxious duties I have mentioned to discharge.

3397. But is it not the fact that they find greater difficulties in obtaining information in Westmeath than in any other counties?—So far as information goes, it is not difficult to know who is going to be shot, but it is impossible to know when the victim is going to be shot, or, when he is shot, who has done it.

3398. Is a great deal of the time of the constabulary occupied with drill?—No; the whole force, not including the depôt (where the men are trained), have to parade at a certain hour every morning, but they are not regularly drilled. The parade depends upon what other duties the men have to perform; it may not last ten minutes.

3399. They learn their drill before they are appointed to the station?—Yes, as well as all their police duties.

3400. Is a great deal of their time occupied in writing, or in other routine duties?—In every question about the police the great cry is "Too much writing." I have reduced the amount considerably since I have been at the head of the force.

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3401. Will you tell the Committee what kind of writing it is that they have to do?—There are reports of every description; every outrage is reported; the constable has a diary, a house-holder, a fines, and a patrol-book, to keep up; and of course all the monthly accounts have to be made out by the sub-inspectors of the district.

3402. You have reduced the amount of that class of work?—Very considerably.

3403. Do you think it could be still further reduced?—I am now engaged in revising the code of regulations. I have taken every step to reduce it to the minimum.

3404. It is the duty of the sub-constable, is it not, as soon as he obtains any information, to give it to the head constable?—To give it to the constable or the sub-inspector.

3405. To his immediate superior officer?—I should not say to the immediate superior officer, because the immediate superior officer is the officer commanding the district; I should say to the constable or person in charge of the sub-district.

3406. It has been suggested to this Committee that the constabulary would be more active, or might be more active, in obtaining information, if they were allowed to work out the cases for themselves?—They always do.

3407. A constable would not take a case out of the sub-constable's hands then?—There is an order that I issued about two years ago, when it came to my ears that the sub-constable, on getting information, had given it to his constable; I have reward boards, and I found there was a feeling amongst the men that the constable, or other person in charge, used to take it upon himself to get the reward, instead of the sub-constable who was actually deserving of it, for getting the information. I obviated that by issuing an order that, in every case forwarded to head-quarters of any crime, the report is to be seen by every individual concerned, and after each of them has seen what he considered to be a proper statement as to the part he has taken, he is to make his remarks upon it, should he have any objection to offer.

3408. But when the sub-constable obtains any information, how many persons is it necessary should immediately know it?—Supposing, in a case of Ribbonism, a sub-constable has got hold of an informer, he mentions the fact to his constable, and the constable would send word of it to the sub-inspector, like Mr. Townsend, and Mr. Townsend would go to the place and ascertain the facts, and put the case in training, and take steps to follow up the information for the purpose of obtaining a conviction.

3409. Would not Mr. Townsend report it to the county inspector?—Certainly; after he had seen the case he would report it to the county inspector.

3410. And the county inspector would inform you?—That would depend upon how far the case had gone. There are many things which are not reported to me, as it would take up the officer's time too much to be continually writing; the county inspector and the sub-inspector are the responsible people for following up the crime.

3411. But is it not possible that there is an apprehension in the minds of people that any information which they give to a constable will not be confined to him, but will immediately become known to a great number of people?—I have not heard of that.

3412. Do you not think it is probable?—I do not think so.

3413. To what do you attribute the difficulty which is found in obtaining information in Ribbon cases?—From the very fact of the way in which the Ribbon system is constructed. I have heard people say, let us send down a man into such and such a place and get him into a trade or calling. I need not go back to the Committees of 1839 and 1852 to explain the phases of Ribbonism; they have altered considerably since that time. I, myself, know a good deal about the lodges in Westmeath; they are not affiliated to a common centre as they used to be to Birmingham, Leeds, Manchester, Liverpool, and other places; but a man to get into the Ribbon lodges must be a long time sojourning in the neighbourhood; he must be known, and in some lodges he must test what he is worth, by being obliged to commit an agrarian outrage before he becomes a Ribbonman.

3414. And it is to the organisation of the Ribbon conspiracy you think is to be attributed the difficulty which has been found in getting information?—Yes. I can give an instance which was brought to me by ———; his steward was shot at twice; and that steward came up to me in the gentleman's presence, and I said to him, "Do you not really think that that was the man who fired at you?" and he denied it; and I said to him, "How long have you been in the county?" and he said, "I have been in the county your honour for all my life." I then said, "Do you mean to tell me that you cannot, and that none of your friends or relatives could give any idea as to who shot at you?" and he said, "Well, your honour, I can tell you this, that if they gave me a hint of it, they would be shot themselves as well as myself." The terror is so great no one would ever think of giving information as to who did it, or how it was done.

3415. With reference to the detective force, I believe that some alteration has been made in the system of detectives within a short time?—A great alteration has been made within the last year and a half, or two years, which is not known by any one in the country, and I think the less it is known the better.

3416. In your opinion, is it more efficient than it was?—Certainly; points are coming out every day which prove it. At the last Spring Assizes, I think, with the exception of Kildare, the judges did not say that the constabulary wanted efficiency; but there were a great number of anonymous letters in the county of Kildare. One man may send 50 anonymous letters, and it is very difficult to discover the writers. The jury will not convict upon an expert's evidence only, you must have corroborative evidence.

3417. Is it the case that drilled men, with their hair cut short behind, are sent down as detectives, and are recognised as soon as they come into the country?—I never heard of such a thing.

3418. That is not the case?—Certainly not. If the Committee will only refer to the Royal Commission of five years ago, they will find the same thing stated. When a magistrate told me about the military hair, and so on, he said he had heard it, but he found on examination there was no truth in it; they are allowed to wear a beard and moustache, and anything they like; their hair is not cut short; I am not surprised that such ideas going about give a bad impression of the constabulary.

3419. In your opinion, would any alteration of the constabulary enable you to cope with the Ribbon

Ribbon organisation?—Certainly not; I have made the whole thing a study, and that is my opinion.

3420. You consider that changes will have to be made to render the force more effective than it has been hitherto?—Certainly.

3421. Still you do not anticipate that it will ever be able to cope with Ribbonism?—Certainly not; I plead ignorance of Ribbonism, which is about the only thing I find I cannot master.

3422. You do not think that any change in the organisation of the force, generally, would make them more efficient for the purpose of finding out Ribbonism?—I do not think it would, although I am sorry to say it.

3423. Are you acquainted with the constabulary system of England?—A little.

3424. You do not think that any assimilation of the Irish constabulary, supposing on other grounds it was possible, would make it more efficient in the detection of crime?—Certainly not; the two countries are as different from each other as chalk from cheese.

3425. Mr. *Disraeli.*] You spoke of those parts of the country where Ribbonism prevails; what part of the country would Ribbonism prevail in?—At this present moment there is great difference of opinion upon that point. You hear some people talk about Ribbonism in some counties, such as Tipperary; but there is no such thing there. I look upon it as existing in King's County, Meath, and Westmeath. The only instance in the county of Roscommon that I know was in the town of Athlone, in the case of Captain Tarlatan, and when I was inspecting in Monaghan, I had reason to believe that there was a a little of it in a portion of that county. There are crimes committed in Mayo, but I do not think the Ribbon system prevails there, yet it may extend to it.

3426. What portion of your force is employed in those districts where Ribbonism prevails?—I should think, to the best of my recollection, in Westmeath there must be at this present moment about 400 men, but considering that I have 13,000 men under me, that is a difficult question to answer accurately.

3427. Does that number include the extra police in Westmeath?—I think I am including them. At this present moment the whole of the extra police are not there, because so many vacancies occur. I think I had only last month 350 vacancies, so that I am not sure whether I am right in saying that there are about 400 men at the present moment in Westmeath.

3428. Would you have, perhaps, about the same in other districts where Ribbonism is supposed to prevail?—In Meath, we have about that number; in King's County it is a smaller number.

3429. The whole amount of your force would be about 16,000 men, would it not?—Not quite so much as that; 12,600 men and 300 officers.

3430. Mr. *Hardy.*] In your opinion would it be necessary that there should be some new means taken to cope with Ribbonism other than those which are taken at present?—I have written strongly upon the subject for the last year and a-half to the Government.

3431. They are in possession of Reports of yours upon that subject?—Yes, very strong Reports.

3432. Recommending additional measures?—Recommending the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act.

3433. Mr. *Bruen.*] You say that the duties of police as regards road nuisances, and as regards the collection of the dog tax, make them unpopular?—Yes.

3434. In the western parts of Ireland they have duties as regards the suppression of illicit distillation, have they not?—That duty ought never to have been imposed upon the force, for a very strong reason, which I can give the Committee if they particularly desire it.

3435. With regard to the duties of the police, would you go so far as to say that they ought to be relieved from all the duties that make them unpopular?—If so they would have to be relieved of a good many other duties, but I think the two duties which call for reformation are the duties connected with the road nuisances and the dog-tax, but the road nuisances especially. There is not a man in the force who will not tell you the same thing.

3436. Is the only reason why you think they should be relieved from those duties the fact of their making them unpopular?—That is the principal reason; that they make the people unfriendly towards the police.

3437. Mr. *Hardy.*] And prevent their useful association with the peasantry?—They prevent their useful association with the peasantry, and that has a very serious effect.

3438. Mr. *Downing.*] You do not agree with this evidence: "A man comes down with his hair cut short behind, and his very walk can be recognised at the end of a mile upon the road"?—Certainly not.

3439. "The country people immediately give the sign, and say: 'What does that fellow want here; where does he come from.'" You do not believe that?—The country people are very acute people, and they would tell him without that. I do not agree with that statement about the hair being cut short. I will illustrate a little what is going on. A gentleman in Mayo sent for a policeman, and I told my detective officer to send a particular man to Mayo. It was reported to the Lord Lieutenant that he was of no use; that he was too military in his appearance, and quite unfit for the purpose. My deputy (for I was upon an inspection) brought this very man into the presence of the Under Secretary, and he did not know that he was a detective, and said that he could not tell he was one; this was the very man who was of so military an appearance; this occurred within the last five weeks.

3440. Do you not know of your own knowledge that during the Fenian conspiracy detectives were sent to a great number of towns where the disaffected people were at the time, and were totally unknown to the people until they left?—They never were known as detectives at all.

3441. You have said repeatedly that the road nuisances and the collection of the dog tax, or getting information respecting it, made the police unpopular?—Yes.

3442. Is not it a more unpopular thing that the police should be called upon to some extent to protect game and to arrest poachers?—I do not view the subject in that light, because they have got nothing to do with it, at least, they have not to become gamekeepers, if I recollect rightly; they are not to go across the fields to look after poachers, but if they come into the public road, the police may say to a suspected man, "Let me see what you have there," and he may take him

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up; but as for making the police gamekeepers, that is not the intention of the Act.

3443. Does that make the police unpopular with the people?—No, I never heard that. The road nuisance has always been dinned into my ears as being the chief grievance.

3444. With regard to the protection of fisheries, it has been stated, I believe, that that has also been a service of unpopularity?—Not only that, but a disadvantage to us. When any policeman has a chance of getting a reward, it leads him to look more after the fisheries than after the peace of the neighbourhood.

3445. It is a very common thing, that people go upon dark nights with lights upon the river for the purpose of killing fish, is it not?—It is.

3446. You are of opinion, that employing the police in protecting the fisheries makes them very unpopular?—I do not say so much about its unpopularity as about its leading the men to look for rewards away from their legitimate duties, because they get a reward in that case, and they would much prefer the chance of picking up a few shillings to looking after the protection of the towns.

3447. You are aware that under the Towns Improvement Act the Commissioners and their inspectors are the persons to look after all these nuisances?—Yes.

3448. And the road contractor, you think, ought to be the person who would look after those nuisances in his district?—I think so.

3449. I believe, in a great many districts, the police have scarcely ever a case before the bench of magistrates except for road nuisances?—And drunkenness. I think it is so.

3450. You stated that you knew the Ribbon lodges generally in Westmeath?—I do not say that I know where the lodges are. I could not go to a particular Ribbon lodge, but I know that certain lodges exist in Westmeath. We may have one at such a place, and another at another, and all pretty nearly under the same rules; but some, in one district especially, are much more severe than in others.

3451. You do not mean to say that you know, of your own knowledge, of the lodges?—No; I know that there are different lodges.

3452. From what you hear?—From what I hear.

3453. Mr. *Gregory.*] Do you think that, in case the suppression of road nuisances were left to the road contractors, the roads would be in a very fit state to travel on after a short time?—I have no knowledge of what the road contractors are; there is not the slightest doubt that, like most things in Ireland, the police are obliged to look after it, because they do everything better than any one else.

3454. Do you not think that the road contractor who summoned people for having pigs upon the high road would probably be removed to a happier world before very long?—I am only talking about a very obnoxious duty being put upon the police.

3455. But as the obnoxious duty is that of keeping the roads clear, is it not patent that the roads ought to be kept clear, and that it is not very likely that the agency of road contractors would effect that object?—Then the duty could be performed by some one else, if the road contractors could not do it.

3456. Who would you suggest?—I did not give that a thought, so long as I could get it away from the police.

3457. You state that these circumstances render the police unpopular?—Very much so.

3458. Do you not think that the employment of the police in the service of law and order renders them very unpopular in certain districts?—No; I consider that every well-thinking person, and even the bad ones, know that it is the duty of the police to look after law and order.

3459. Now when large parties go down to have the pleasure of a faction fight in some counties in Ireland, do you not think that the police are very unpopular in preventing those little ebulitions?—But those are very uncommon things; I have never seen one; I tried to see one once, but I could not.

3460. Do you know Tubba in the county of Clare?—Yes.

3461. Do you know that there are faction fights there very often?—Yes, I have heard so; but none of late.

3462. Do you know of a man having been killed there in a general faction fight?—I could not say it was a faction fight; but I have heard of a man being nearly killed there.

3463. At all events it was a fight between two parties, and do you not think that the police were extremely unpopular in endeavouring to arrest those parties, and to bring them to trial?—Of course they were.

3464. With regard to the writing that the police have to do, I have heard it stated a good deal of the efficiency of your serjeants has diminished by the large amount of writing that was thrown upon them by the sub-inspectors; do you believe that that is the case?—If I heard of it you may depend upon it that the sub-inspector would not do it again; but I never heard of it.

3465. It is not the case?—There is no doubt that there is a good deal of writing; but as I tell you I have reduced it as much as I can. We must have some writing done; but I do not think that any officer would impose upon his sub-officers or sub-constables the duty of doing the writing. I do not think that they would dare to do it, and certainly they would not do it a second time if I heard of it.

3466. I have heard that the efficiency of the serjeants of police was a good deal hampered by work being thrown upon them which was not quite within their province, in order to help the officers whose duty it was to do it; you do not think that that is the case, do you?—I do not; and I should be glad to hear of any case that might be brought before me.

3467. Mr. *James.*] When did you first come to the conclusion that it would be advisable to suspend the Habeas Corpus Act?—In December, 1869.

3468. Was that from personal observation in Westmeath, or from reports that were sent to you?—From reports and from conversation.

3469. In Westmeath itself?—From officers in Westmeath, and also when I have been down in Westmeath.

3470. Do you visit Westmeath when you inspect your head-quarters?—The head-quarters of counties and districts are inspected, and the officers and men examined in their police and detective duties every third year by an officer from head-quarters. The districts and sub-districts every alternate year by them; besides, the county inspector examines the men in their different duties once every three months, and the sub-inspectors once every month.

3471. How often would you visit Westmeath for inspection?—Twice in seven years.

3472. I take

3472. I take it that you have not been in Westmeath itself since 1867?—I think not.

3473. And at that time the Habeas Corpus Act was suspended?—Yes, that was for the Fenian conspiracy; Ribbonism was down and Fenianism was up.

3474. Do you know anything of the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act in relation to Fenianism?—Yes.

3475. Did you bear any of the responsibility, in recommending and advising who should be arrested at all?—I do not know about the responsibility, but I can tell you the process which was adopted. If a man was suspected of Fenianism, whenever we knew the man and had information, we laid it before the Government, with a recommendation that a warrant should be issued, and, of course, the Lord Lieutenant considering the information all correct, issued his warrant for the arrest of the man, and he was placed in gaol.

3476. Then the suggestion to the Lord Lieutenant came directly through you from the officers below you?—In a great measure.

3477. Did you ever hear the suggestion made that any innocent person had been wrongly arrested?—I never, to my recollection, have heard of a single man being arrested by the constabulary improperly.

3478. I am speaking of the Fenian arrests?—Yes, that is what I am referring to.

3479. Have you any knowledge how many persons were arrested in the Westmeath district in consequence of the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act?—There was very little Fenianism in Westmeath. Fenianism did not extend itself to Westmeath in those days as in other places; it was more in Cork, Limerick, and the Southern counties.

3480. Probably you could not give the Committee the number that were arrested?—No, I do not think there would be any means of letting you know that.

3481. You do not know, I presume, how the Habeas Corpus Suspension Act would be received by the people of Westmeath?—Yes, I could tell you.

3482. From your own knowledge?—I could tell you from the information received from the men of my force, and gentlemen in the county generally, that I have spoken to, that the suspension of the Habeas was the only step to put a stop to Ribbonism. In King's County the very idea of the suspension is having a very good effect now, for I happened to be at Clara, and Tubba, and Kilfoylan, and I could not get anybody to cook or do anything for my men. I was at Kilfoylan about Moran's case, and the police were asked everywhere: "What about the Bill this morning and the suspension." They are most anxious to know what is going on about the suspension.

3483. Mr. Serjeant *Sherlock.*] With regard to these road nuisances, is it not the fact, that since the establishment of the constabulary in Ireland under the late Sir Robert Peel, it has been the duty of the police to look after these road nuisances?—Yes, from before my time; from the beginning of the force, I believe.

3484. Would it at all affect the efficiency of the force if the married men were allowed to sleep out of barracks; have you ever considered that?—Certainly; a certain number are allowed to live out of barracks; but, perhaps, the Committee are not aware of that.

3485. Is that in country districts?—In every district married people who cannot be provided with barrack accommodation are allowed to live out of barracks; within the last three months I have allowed them to have a little piece of land and a pig.

3486. Therefore they can mix with the people at night?—Yes, so much so that in these very places, Westmeath and two other counties, when they are off duty, they are out in plain clothes, and do everything as they like.

3487. Colonel *Wilson Patten.*] What proportion of the police in Ireland are instructed in the detection of crime; is it the whole, or only a portion of them?—The whole force in Ireland; a detective is very well in large towns, but in country districts in Ireland, whenever a stranger goes into the country, the children of eight or ten years will say, "Bedad, that's a paler," and he is put in Coventry. I know a case in Leitrim where a man was put in Coventry, and, if you like, I could tell you some very amusing stories to show you what keen people the Irish are.

3488. How do you ascertain for yourself in your inspections that the police are efficient as detectives as well as in their general duties?—Because I examine them myself in their detective duties as well as in their police duties; if you ask any man in the force he will tell you how he is examined.

3489. Mr. *Solicitor General for Ireland.*] Had you any experience with the police before you were appointed Deputy Inspector General in Ireland?—A smattering; I had the command of the police at Aldershot.

3490. You had been in the army before you went to Ireland?—I had.

3491. You had no particular knowledge of the police force?—No, I cannot say that I had.

3492. You were appointed Deputy Inspector General in 1860?—I was appointed in 1860.

3493. Had you ever been in Ireland before?—Never in my life.

3494. You were never in Ireland until you acquired that official position?—No, I had served in nearly every quarter of the world, but I had not been in Ireland.

3495. That was the first time you made your appearance there in any police capacity?—In any capacity.

3496. And you remained in that capacity until the month of May 1864?—May 1865.

3497. And then you were appointed Inspector General?—Yes; directly after the Fenian outbreak I entirely changed the system.

3498. When were you in Westmeath last?—For inspection, in 1868.

3499. But you went down the other day?—I went down to inquire into Supple's case, and to inquire about another matter.

3500. To acquire useful information?—Yes.

3501. But you have not been there for inspection since 1867?—I think that it was in 1868 that I went there for inspection, and not in 1867.

3502. You told the Committee that you objected to the police being used for road nuisances?—Yes, I do.

3503. And also with respect to fisheries?—I did not bring up that question, but I certainly do, because it takes them away from their legitimate duties.

3504. And you also object to their being employed with reference to dogs?—Yes.

3505. I suppose that you would also object to there being used in regard to these gun licenses?—I have

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—I have already done so as strongly as I could; I think those duties detract from their usefulness as a constabulary force and as regards the detection of crime.

3506. I believe that the regulations are being revised as regards the management of the police?—Yes, I am revising them myself now.

3507. And giving them as little writing to do as you can manage, consistently with affording proper information to the head quarters?—Yes, that is my object among other things; every person has his own ideas of managing his own affairs; I have my own ideas of it; I am doing it gradually.

3508. You do not think that you are too wedded to the military idea?—I hope I am not.

3509. Do you suspect that you have military predilections?—That is rather a delicate question, but I think that I am trying to drive the military system out.

3510. Upon the whole you are making changes in the direction of making them a less military force?—Certainly.

3511. Everything is done that can be reasonably expected to be done?—I should be delighted to show any one the system, and then it would show how little the outer world knows of what is going on in Ireland.

3512. Sir *G. Grey.*] I think you said that there was no other police force which had duties imposed upon it similar to those which you have mentioned; are you acquainted with the duties performed by the county constabulary in England?—I cannot say thoroughly.

3513. Do you know whether those duties, such as giving information about persons who allow their cattle to obstruct the roads, or about dogs, are performed by the police in the county districts in England?—I think not

3514. The excise, and not constabulary, you think, should not perform the duty with reference to the dogs, and the contractor should look after the road nuisances; have they the means at present of doing that?—They have not the means at present, but they should have the means supplied to them.

3515. Mr. *Bruen.*] Would not that entail extra expense upon the road contractors?—Certainly.

3516. *Chairman.*] When you recommended the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act in the month of December 1869, several parts of Ireland were in a very bad state, were they not?—I think they were confined to three or four or five counties to the best of my recollection.

3517. Was Westmeath one?—Meath was the worst, then Mayo and Westmeath and part of King's County; I think that those were the counties, but Meath at that time, as I say, was the worst.

3518. Were there any outrages in Tipperary?—Certainly there were; Mr. Bradshaw's murder and others.

3519. In the Report you referred to you did not make any especial reference to Westmeath, did you?—No, I did not.

3520. You recommended it as a general measure?—Yes, for those particular counties.

3521. That was before the introduction of the Peace Preservation Act?—Yes; that was in December 1869; the beginning of the Peace Preservation Act was about June last year.

3522. But I gather from your evidence that the Peace Preservation Act has failed so far as regards Westmeath?—I think so; I think Westmeath is the hotbed of Ribbonism.

3523. In your opinion has the Peace Preservation Act been of use except in the Ribbon districts of Westmeath?—Yes, in some parts of Meath and some parts of King's County it has been of use.

3524. In Mayo its effects have been good, have they not?—I do not look upon Mayo as being so bad as Westmeath, and so far it has done a little good there.

3525. To what do you attribute that improvement?—Crime has been got under in a great measure, Mayo is rather quieter this year than it was last.

3526. To what do you attribute that fact?—I attribute it to the Peace Preservation Act being carried out in some portions of it.

3527. But you did not make any distinction just now between Westmeath and the other disturbed districts. I presume you would not recommend the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, as a general measure?—No, I would not.

3528. Mr. *Hardy.*] I understand you to say that you made several reports?—I have written two letters upon the subject; one in December 1869, to the best of my recollection, and the other, I think, in January this year.

3529. Did you, in your last report, refer to Ireland generally, or only to Westmeath?—That report pointed exclusively to Westmeath, and in strong terms.

The Right Honourable Colonel FITZSTEPHEN FRENCH, a Member of the House; Examined.

Rt. Hon. Col. *F. French*, M.P.

3530. Mr. Serjeant *Sherlock.*] YOU have represented the county of Roscommon for a great number of years, have you not?—Yes; for about 39 years.

3531. The county of Roscommon is adjoining to the county of Westmeath, separated by the river Shannon?—Yes, it is; half of the borough of Athlone is in one county and half in the other, and there is just the river between them.

3532. I think that you have some property in Athlone and in the neighbourhood?—I have a good deal of property in Athlone, about that end of it which adjoins Westmeath.

3533. And I believe you have been also member of the grand jury for the county of Roscommon?—I have, for the last 45 years generally acting as foreman.

3534. And when you are in Ireland you generally attend the petty sessions?—I attend all the petty sessions in my neighbourhood, four in number.

3535. Have you heard of the disturbances in the county of Westmeath?—Yes, I have attended to them.

3536. Have you formed an opinion as to what the origin of those disturbances is?—The origin of the Ribbon disturbance was supposed to be locally connected very much with the tenure of land; it was totally different from Fenianism.

3537. You

3537. You have heard of the difficulty of dealing with this class of offences; have you considered, and can you tell the Committee from what, in your opinion, the difficulty arises of obtaining convictions, and of bringing the offenders to justice?—The difficulty arises very much from the state which the county has been suffered to get into. There is a reign of terror over all the people; they are afraid to give information, and they will not assist in enforcing the law. No body of police, and no body of military, unless they get some support from public opinion, can avail to put an end to local disturbances of this kind.

3538. Are you of opinion that a military force, if brought into operation, and the police force as at present existing, are totally ineffectual to suppress crime?—Totally ineffectual, and no addition to them could make them effectual.

3539. Would you give the Committee your reasons for saying that no addition to them could make them effectual?—Because the police force when on duty, only occupy the ground upon which they are marching; their measured tread is at once recognised, and, as it is termed, spotted, and the knowledge that they were by even the children of the different places they passed through, would render them incapable of acting with efficiency, and the same thing applies to the military.

3540. Can you suggest to the Committee anything which would check crime and bring the offenders to justice?—I have no doubt that it could be done cheaply and speedily (as it has been done before) by the people themselves, and by no other force.

3541. When you state that it has been done by the people themselves, to what circumstance do you allude?—The circumstance I allude to is this: the county I have the honour to represent was, in 1848, in as bad a state, or probably in a worse state, than Westmeath or any other county, Clare, Louth, or Monaghan has been in, but the people there put a stop to the whole of those illegal proceedings. I was instrumental in doing it at the request of the then Lord Lieutenant of Ireland; Lord Clarendon.

3542. Will you mention to the Committee what steps you took for stopping these illegal proceedings which you refer to?—The Act under which peace and order were restored was the 2nd & 3rd William the Fourth, chapter 108. That Act enabled any two justices of the peace to swear in persons in their barony or half barony, or certain district, as special constables. The notice of your having sworn in those men must be sent to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and approved of by him; and there is also a necessity now for serving the lieutenants of the counties. If you state that there is any person who would be exempt from serving on account of his official position, if desired, the Lord Lieutenant has the power to order him to be served; there is a penalty in the Act of 5 *l.* for every man refusing to serve as a special constable. I never had an instance of a man refusing to serve. The oath is a very simple one; I will read it: "That I will well and truly serve our Sovereign Lord the King in the office of special constable, for the parish of ——, without favour or affection, malice, or ill-will; and that I will, to the best of my power, cause the peace to be kept and preserved, and prevent all offences against the persons and properties of his Majesty's subjects, and that while I continue to hold said office, I will, to the best of my skill and knowledge, discharge all the duties thereof faithfully, according to law." No person could well object to take an oath of that kind, and I never knew one objection to it. If any objection was made, it deprived the person refusing to serve of the advantages of the Land Act of 1870.

3543. Mr. *Pemberton.*] At whose instance is this machinery to be put in operation?—It was under this Act that we put the landowners of Roscommon to work to stop it.

3544. Does the Lord Lieutenant put it in motion, or the magistrates themselves?—The magistrates themselves. But when I alluded to Lord Clarendon, I should say that Lord Clarendon asked me if I could do this in the county that I represent. At this time, in the end of 1847, Major Mahon was murdered in the open daylight; he was a man of from 10,000 *l.* to 12,000 *l.* a year in the county, and the Reverend Mr. Lloyd was also murdered. Half-a-dozen farmers, owning from 100 to 150 acres, were fired at, and 10 of the largest graziers, mostly Roman Catholics, holding from 1,000 to 3,000 acres, were informed that their names were all down in the Ribbon list to be shot. Lord Crofton and others were forced to leave the county by repeated threats of assassination. The houses of the peasantry were broken into, and the owners were forced upon their knees to take the Ribbon oath, and were forced to subscribe money for the defence of all prisoners taken under the Act. That was the state the country was in. We had the high roads patrolled night and day. There were bodies of police stationed upon the roads to protect the ordinary traffic up to the town of Roscommon.

3545. Sir *G. Grey.*] How many special constables did you swear in?—I swore in about 200 in the year 1848, but I did not use nearly that number.

3546. Those were the special constables?—Yes; that was the state of the county when the special constables were sworn in. I divided the body (they were men entirely from the barony of Frenchpark, tenants of my brother) into small bodies of from 10 to 15, and stationed them at the places which we considered most liable to be attacked by Ribbonmen from the other districts, keeping them at proper distances from each other, so that if one party was attacked, the other could come up as rapidly as possible to their assistance. I was out with them day and night.

3547. Were any of those special constables themselves Ribbonmen?—That is rather a difficult question to answer, but I should say that there were some of them who were Ribbonmen. In fact, from the information which I got from them, they must have been Ribbonmen to have been able to tell me what they did, but they very soon shook off the Ribbonmen and became a party attached to order.

3548. Were they paid?—They are paid 1 *s.* a night; but they found in a very short time that they became the dominant party, and that the Ribbonmen were a very contemptible party.

3549. *Chairman.*] Will you state to the Committee what they actually did?—The special constables were stationed just as I told you; they received letters from the Ribbonmen, threatening

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that they would come in and very soon settle all this attempt to impede their power; but our men took the thing very coolly, they burned the letters as soon as they received them, and went out, some of them armed, but the greater part of them armed only with heavy cudgels; there were generally about three or four of them armed, but, practically, they never were attacked, and the Ribbonmen never came into the district; they never had force enough, and things got very quiet elsewhere throughout the country.

3550. Are the Committee to understand that the presence of these men alone was sufficient to put down Ribbonism?—Perfectly sufficient; the men stated to me themselves that they were very glad that they were brought together, because they were the men who had really suffered from the tyranny of the Ribbonmen, and could not defend their houses, but now that they were standing shoulder to shoulder they cared very little for the Ribbonmen; and I think they showed the Ribbonmen afterwards how little they cared for them, both at fairs and markets.

3551. Did these special constables make any arrests?—No; I tell you nobody came in; no attack was made upon them. But with reference to the persons who committed the murders which I have alluded to, the result was that confidence came into the country; the juries convicted them all, and every man connected with these murders was hanged, the three murderers of Major Mahon and the murderer of Mr. Lloyd; and several of the men who were taken up for firing were transported.

3552. Then evidence was to be had?—Evidence was to be had everywhere.

3553. Sir *G. Grey.*] How long after the murder of Major Mahon were the persons arrested who committed the murder?—I think that Major Mahon was shot at the end of 1847, and I think the men were hanged at the Spring Assizes of 1849.

3554. Was there originally after the crime was committed a difficulty in obtaining evidence to charge anybody with the crime?—Very great difficulty; so strong was the feeling amongst the people that they illuminated all the hills around on the night of his death.

3555. By what means was the evidence obtained?—By their not fearing the body that had done these things, and coming forward and giving evidence. I should mention that the entire amount that they cost us in the county of Roscommon, was 160 *l.*, which was paid out of the barony of Frenchpark.

3556. How long were the constables kept on duty?—About a month or six weeks.

3557. Mr. Serjeant *Sherlock.*] We have heard a great deal of the state of Westmeath, which I gather is not as bad as it was at this time; do you think that it would be necessary now to resort to the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act?—I am opposed to the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act for many reasons. First, the effect of the suspension is merely temporary; when you take off the pressure, up it starts again. We never have seen any beneficial consequences arising from the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act. It condones all the negligence of the local magistracy, to which I think a good deal may be fairly attributed. A great deal of the difficulties Government has had to contend with are due to delay; and it also condones a good deal of want of vigour on the part of the executive government, and it weakens the self-reliance of the people. I do not see any beneficial result from it at all, nor do I see any reason why the law which I have quoted of the 2nd & 3rd of William the Fourth, is not perfectly sufficient to meet the difficulty. I have found when the Habeas Corpus Act was suspended that it acted much more annoyingly to the people who had nothing to say to it than to those who were actually guilty. I could understand the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act as being advantageous to prevent crime in this way. If a man came from America for the purpose of committing crime, you would arrest him, but I do not see that it is any good being able to shut up a man whom you have no evidence against for a certain time.

3558. I collect that your opinion is, that the police force is too much of a military force to be so efficient as if it was less so?—My opinion is, that the police force is too much of a military force, though I have heard that the officer in command, Sir John Wood, has made some alteration in that respect, in order to make them more useful as detectives. He is a distinguished soldier, and he has a taut hand in making the men under him do their duty, and if he does that, I think he may very much improve the police in their detective position; but as soldiers he could not have anything better, I think, though the regulation that they are not to be stationed in counties they are connected with by birth or marriage diminishes their efficiency in my opinion.

3559. Mr. *Solicitor General for Ireland.*] In those days were there not armed bands wandering about the country?—There were, putting people on their knees, with pistols to their heads, and making them take the oath.

3560. Were your special constables moved about?—Yes, they were.

3561. Your special constables were a sort of armed neutrality?—They were men protecting their own lives and property.

3562. Did they do anything?—No, because the others took very great care that there was nothing to do.

3563. They walked about the roads at night?—They did, and no stranger was allowed in the district.

3564. Do you think that a body of constables would be equally effective in counties where armed bands do not march round the roads at night, but where there is a secret conspiracy breaking out in acts of outrage in various localities?—Those acts of outrage which break out occasionally come from certain orders of the Ribbonmen; and I believe the bulk of the people to be as anxious as anybody to put an end to that system which is now frightening them all out of their lives.

3565. But how could the special constables do that?—Take the case of Westmeath; you have 17 deputy lieutenants; you have 115 magistrates; you have but 12 baronies; and is it not a matter of course that if those men would exert themselves in their position, with their local influence and everything of that kind, these things would be nipped in the bud? But if the magistrates are afraid to act, and let the whole thing depend upon the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, there will be no good done. The Executive have in place of the local knowledge, personal influence of the local magistracy, only

only the exertions of 73 stipendiary magistrates to rely on, the sole qualification for whose appointment is to be under 40 years of age.

3566. Do you suggest that there should be a vigilance committee?—I am told that you will have a vigilance committee before long. I have been told that it has been considered whether it is not advisable that Captain Duffy should be shot. At Mr. Perry's brewery, where they shot Mr. Perry's man, a man came to the place and asked for it; and Mr. Perry said to him, "How could you wish to take a place where a man has been murdered? And he said, "I will risk that; there is only one man who could get me shot, and I will have an inkling of it; and he would know his days would be numbered if I heard of it."

3567. Is it not the fact that the local magistrates must put themselves in motion to apply for power to swear in these special constables?—Any two of them under the Act of the 2nd & 3rd of William the Fourth may do so. The Right honourable Member for Morpeth had a good deal of communication with us upon the subject when he was Home Secretary with Lord Clarendon, and at that time was good enough to say that he would mention in Parliament his approval of the course I had taken if I would furnish him with the circumstance, but I thought that as the thing was done the less that was said the better.

3568. Mr. *Gregory*.] You stated to the Committee that the repeal of the Habeas Corpus Act has always been a perfect failure; has it ever been applied with regard to Ribbon outrages?—It has been applied more as regards Fenianism, but I do not say that it has not been applied as regards Ribbonism. I do not recollect, but I do not think that it has.

The Witness withdrew.

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APPENDIX.

Appendix, No. 1.

PAPER handed in by the Chairman.

Crime in Ireland.

Observations by Mr. *Seed,* Crown Solicitor.

The following are a few facts and observations on the present state of crime in Ireland, and on the allegations that proper steps have not been taken by the Government for its suppression.

The allegations so frequently put forth in the latter part of the year 1869 and beginning of 1870 being now renewed, assailing the Government for supineness and delay in not adopting proper measures for the suppression of crime, I take the liberty of offering a few observations upon that subject, which possibly may be found useful.

First. With reference to the state of crime:—Although at present there are two or three districts in Ireland in which outrages to some extent prevail, still serious crime is nearly one-half less prevalent now than it was in several past years, and in many counties it has ceased altogether. In Meath, for instance, which was the most disturbed county in Ireland in 1868 and 1869 and in the early part of 1870, there has been literally none in comparison, and peace and tranquillity have been entirely restored. An unanswerable proof of which exists in the fact that at the Spring Assizes of 1870, no less than 47 criminal cases were prosecuted by the Crown in that county, under the direction of the Attorney General, while at the approaching assizes there is, up to the present moment, but one case to be prosecuted by the Crown Solicitor, and that is for *simple larceny*; and on the entire Home Circuit, with the exception of Westmeath, there is scarcely any agrarian or aggravated crime.

On the Leinster Circuit, with the exception of five or six cases in Tipperary and Waterford, there is also none.

On the Munster Circuit, including Clare, Limerick, Kerry, and Cork, there are also comparatively but very few.

On the North-East Circuit there are but five or six.

The North-West Circuit stands in a similar position.

And on the Connaught Circuit, including the county of Galway, which in 1868 and 1869 was considerably disturbed, there is literally no agrarian crime in comparison; and at the various quarter sessions in Ireland held during the last nine months, the number of cases for trial were much fewer than for several past years, which of itself furnishes a pretty clear proof of the decrease of crime.

What then is the real and true state of Ireland as regards the commission of crime, notwithstanding the frequent allegations to the contrary? Compare it with years gone by, when in almost every county there were from 50 to 80 Crown prosecutions at each assizes, it is really nothing; and it is because of the comparatively peaceable state of the country that when even a solitary outrage occurs here and there, the whole community takes alarm, the grossest reports are circulated, and the mere apprehension of a return to the distressing crimes of former years, induces exaggeration and excites terror.

It is, therefore, idle to say that crime has increased, and equally so, that proper means have not been taken for its suppression.

Look to the measures that have been adopted within the last 18 months for this purpose; two special commissions have been held; the Peace Preservation Act has been put into operation; general and sweeping searches for arms have been made from time to time, resulting in the disarmament of a vast number of the disaffected; large bodies of troops

Appendix, No. 1.

were sent down to different parts of the country when necessary; the constabulary force was largely augmented in the disturbed districts, assisted by experienced detectives specially selected and employed; constant night patrols visited every part of the country; additional resident magistrates were sent to such districts as required them; the Attorney General, who is ever watchful and always efficient, prosecuted in person in all important cases; the Crown Solicitors, under his direction, have been ordered to attend and investigate all serious crimes whenever and wherever they occur; large rewards have been offered for the discovery of crime; persons who have given honest and truthful information have been placed under the protection and support of the Crown; the exertions of the constabulary, under their able and efficient inspector general, have been unremitting; and the law has been enforced by the Executive with greater promptitude and firmness than I ever recollect it to have been at any former period.

Thus every step that it is possible to conceive, or to have been suggested to be taken, has been taken to suppress crime, unless, indeed, it be the suspension of the Habeas Corpus, for which, however, in my humble judgment, there is no present occasion.

The spirit of the country is more peaceable; the administration of justice is becoming more respected and more feared than it ever yet has been; the people are being taught that the law is more powerful than themselves, and that in upholding it they find their surest protection for their lives and properties; and, as in times past, so will it (I firmly believe) be now, crime will decrease in a tenfold ratio, and the improved and improving condition of the country and of the people under recent legislation, and the present firm and impartial enforcement and administration of the law, will yet restore it to perfect tranquillity and peace.

In all countries crime must exist to a certain extent; it is almost one of the laws of nature that it should be so, and it is utter folly to expect that Ireland can be the sole exception, though I do believe that at this present time it is, as a whole, freer from serious and aggravated crime than any other country in Europe.

If the measures which have been already taken to effect this great object should prove insufficient, it is just possible that the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act in certain districts (not generally) might be beneficial; for instance, in some of the recent outrages the guilty parties are well known, although there may not be sufficient legal evidence to convict them, and the summary arrest and imprisonment of such persons might be attended with the best results.

It might become necessary also to pass an Act or Acts confining the people in their dwellings after dark, and enabling the Queen's Bench, in certain cases, to change the venue, or authorise two or more judges to try them without the intervention of a jury; but, as I have already stated, I think there is no present need of measures so extreme, however justifiable and necessary they might become under circumstances which, I firmly believe and think, will not at present arise.

S. Seed, Crown Solicitor.

Sarahville, Killiney,
11 February 1871.

Appendix, No. 2.

PAPER handed in by the Chairman.

RETURN showing the Number and Nature of WARRANTS Issued for the Collection of EXTRA POLICE TAX since the 23rd of December 1868, the Date on which His Excellency Earl *Spencer* was sworn in to the Lord Lieutenancy of *Ireland*.

COUNTY.	DISTRICT.	Number of Constables.	OUTRAGE.	Period and Commencement of Warrant.	Amount Levied.	Poundage.
					£. s. d.	s. d.
Donegal	Arryheernabin, &c.	6	Firing at John Murphy, Lord Leitrim's bailiff.	Six months from 16 March 1869.	147 3 8	2 3½
Leitrim	Parish of Mohill	5	Murder of Mr. O'Brien	Three months from 27 October 1869.	61 6 7	4 4
	Parish of Mohill	5	Murder of Mr. O'Brien	Six months from 10 May 1869.	122 13 2	8 8
Limerick	Townland of Clonteen	4	Rev. A. M'Loughlin threatened.	Three months from 29 July 1869.	49 1 3	1 4
Mayo	Townland of Menacloughfinny	6	Murder of Mr. James Hunter.	Three months from 27 September 1869.	66 14 5	4 5½
	Barony of Costelloe	5	Mrs. Beytagh threatened	Three months from 19 February 1870.	61 6 7	2 7
	Townlands of Farmhill, &c.	5	Miss Gardiner fired at	Three months from 20 January 1870.	21 12 3	2 8
	Townland of Aghagower	5	Captain Houston's herd threatened.	Six months from 16 March 1870.	122 13 2	– 5
	Townland of Cuilmore, &c.	5	Captain Hunter's shepherd.	Three months from 18 August 1870.	61 6 7	5 3
	Townland of Illanmore	2	Mr. Blake's herd	Three months from 1 October 1870.	7 16 –	5 –
Meath	Townland of Ballinlough	6	Morgan Rotheran fired at	Six months from 16 March 1869.	147 3 8	1 5
Roscommon and Mayo	Townland of Curraghsallagh Townland of Kilcashel, &c.	5	Outrage on Patrick Curragan.	Three months from 1 February 1870.	61 6 7	1 2
	Townland of Curraghsallagh Townland of Kilcashel, &c.	5 additional	Outrage on Patrick Curragan.	Three months from 11 March 1870.	61 6 7	1 2
Tipperary	Townland of Cappagh, &c.	6	Murder of Mr. Bradshaw	Three months from 1 June 1869.	73 11 10	– 10
Westmeath	Townland of Walshertown, South.	4	Firing at William Cassidy	Three months from 3 February 1869.	49 1 3	1 5½
	Township of Mullingar	9	Murder of Mr. Anketell	Three months from 12 March 1869.	110 7 10	– 4
	Townland of Cloneyhaigue, &c.	5	Mr. Hornidge fired at and threatened.	Three months from 20 January 1869.	61 6 7	1 –
	Townland of Cloneyhaigue, &c.	2	Mr. Hornidge fired at and threatened.	Three months from 29 September 1869.	24 10 8	– 4¾

RETURN showing the Number and Nature of Warrants issued for the collection of Extra Police Tax—*continued.*

COUNTY.	DISTRICT.	Number of Constables.	OUTRAGE.	Period and Commencement of Warrant.	Amount Levied.	Poundage.
					£. s. d.	s. d.
Westmeath	Townland of Castletown, &c.	4	Patrick Byrne threatened	Three months from 25 March 1869.	49 1 3	- -¾
	Townland of Kilcumney, &c.	6	Edward Bolton threatened	Six months from 18 March 1869.	147 3 8	- 10
	Townland of Clonbonny, &c.	6	Captain Tarleton's murder.	Three months from 29 April 1869.	73 11 10	- 8¾
	Townland of Ardnagraph	6	Threatened attack on Mr. Gray and Walderstown Barracks, &c.	Three months from 22 November 1869.	73 9 8	1 1
	Townland of Knockycosker	5	Murder of Francis Dowling	Three months from 9 December 1870.	This warrant is in course of collection, but none of the amount has as yet been transmitted to the Receiver.	2 2
	Townlands of Raharney, &c.	5	Firing at Constable Supple.	Three months from 24 January 1871.	Warrant not as yet issued. District* not finally settled.	
Kings	Townlands of Kilfoylan, &c.	5	Firing at Michael Moran	Three months from 1 February 1870.	Warrant not as yet issued. District* not finally settled.	

* The expense of five men for three months is 61 *l.* 6 *s.* 7 *d.*

MEMORANDUM of ADDITIONAL POLICE sent into the Counties of *Kings*, *Meath*, and *Westmeath*, since the 1st January 1870.

	Number of Men.
KINGS COUNTY.	
To form a special station at Kilfoylan, under Peace Preservation Act, in the case of firing at Mr. and Mrs. Moran	5
COUNTY OF MEATH.	
To augment the party at Navan	5
Augmentation to County Force	50
TOTAL	55
COUNTY OF WESTMEATH.	
Augmentation to County Force	100
To form a special station at Ballinagore, in the case of the murder of Dowling, and other outrages	15
To form a special station at Raharney, in the case of firing at Constable Supple	6
TOTAL	121

Appendix, No. 3.

PAPER handed in by the Chairman.

COUNTY OF WESTMEATH.

Appendix, No. 3.

RETURN of HOMICIDES from 1st January 1848 to present Date, inclusive; also, of the Number of Cases of FIRING at the PERSON during the same Period.

RETURN of HOMICIDES committed in *Westmeath* during the Period commencing 1st January 1848, and terminating at the present Date, the Particulars of which are herein given.

HOMICIDES.

Total Number - - - - - 40

	Cases.	Persons.
Convictions for Wilful Murder - - - -	2*	4
Executions - - - - - - - -	1*	2

*In each case two persons for the same crime.

FIRING at the PERSON.

There were also in same period 55 cases of firing at the person, of which the results as to criminal proceedings have been as follows, viz. :—

In 30 cases, no arrests made.
In 1 case, suspected party went to America.
In 18 cases, arrests made, but no conviction.
In 1 case, doubtful.
In 5 cases, convictions.

55

Appendix, No. 3.

WESTMEATH.

HOMICIDES since 1848, inclusive, to present date.

1848.—John Cook, murdered in a field; an arrest, but no trial recorded.
James Flanagan, age 16, waylaid and murdered; no arrest.
Lowden M'Williams, soldier, died of a beating received; one arrest, but bill ignored.

1849.—James Curley, shot in his own house; an agrarian quarrel amongst relatives. Martin and Denis Curley convicted, and sentenced to death; executed.
Pat Connor, gardener, was stabbed to death, for supposed fidelity to his master. John Rogers and Pat Quigley convicted, and sentenced to death. Sentence subsequently commuted to transportation.
Thomas Flynn, shot dead while attempting to take possession of disputed property. William Vize, Esq., J.P., the gentleman in possession, tried and acquitted.

1850.—Roger North, Esq., J.P., shot dead near his own residence. He was about to evict tenants; out of several persons arrested, three were arraigned at successive assizes, and trial postponed from time to time. Two policemen sent to New York to endeavour to arrest Darley Daly, but failed.

1851.—James Carey, shot; verdict of wilful murder against James Kenny, who was arraigned at successive assizes, but trial postponed. At spring assizes, 1853, he was finally discharged for want of evidence.
Walter Dyre, labourer, fatally assaulted while walking with a woman. The supposed assailant absconded.

1852.—In a dispute among robbers concerning the division of booty, a man named Murtagh or Murdoch was shot dead, and buried in a bog. Some of the offenders were convicted and transported.
Thomas Cooney, waylaid, robbed, and beaten to death; the offender (Hugh Lunney) arrested, convicted, and sentenced to death (*i.e.* in 1854).
John Lyons, labourer (a stranger who had obtained employment), beaten to to death; two men arrested, but discharged for want of evidence.
Mich. Regney, skull fractured from a blow of a stone, of which he died. This was a drunken quarrel; seven were arrested, but as the actual offender could not be ascertained, they were all discharged.

1853.—Thomas Farrell, shot dead in his own house; an agrarian outrage. Two arrests, but discharged for want of evidence.
Thomas Kerry, beaten to death; a fruit of the Ribbon Society. Two persons arrested; trial postponed, and final discharge in one case, acquittal in the other.

1856.—James Carey, beaten to death by three or four men who had attacked his son, and to whose assistance he had come; two men arrested, and convicted; two years' imprisonment, with hard labour.
James Kerr, labourer, killed by the blow of a hammer on the head; offender convicted; 18 months' imprisonment, with hard labour.
Mrs. Sarah Kelly, a lady of immense wealth, shot dead while walking with her nephew, Mr. George Stevens, in a field near her demesne. The nephew was suspected, and tried at two successive Assizes, but finally discharged; another man was also tried on charge of conspiracy to murder, but finally discharged.
Owen McLaughlen, waylaid and beaten to death; his son had replaced a discharged farm servant. Two men arrested, and convicted in 1863, but sentence deferred, awaiting decision of Court of Criminal Appeal; finally discharged by Chief Baron Pigot at Spring Assizes, 1864.

1858.—Edward Kelly, respectable farmer, waylaid and shot dead; he had taken some land which another was anxious to get; some arrests were made, but *no* persons were returned for trial.
Mary Gavagan, labourer's wife, who lived on bad terms with her husband, was found dead with skull fractured. Pat Coffey arrested; trial postponed from time to time; Coffey was finally let out on bail at Spring Assizes, 1859, to appear when called on.

1859.—Thomas Jessop, farmer, shot dead; he had taken a farm in connection with which Edward Kelly had been shot (*see* above); several arrests were made without success.
Thomas Geraghty, labourer, was murdered and thrown into a bog hole; a drunken quarrel; two arrests and convictions; three years' penal servitude in each case.
Pat Lyons, labourer, died from injuries on the head inflicted by two navvies, who were convicted and sentenced each to seven years' penal servitude.
James Boylan, labourer, died from a stab in the abdomen received when returning from a funeral; offender sentenced to 12 months' imprisonment, with hard labour.

1859.—Lawrence Kelly, farmer, shot dead while sitting at his dinner; he had advertised that he would dispose of a portion of his land in Conacre; one man arrested, but discharged.

1861.—Owen Sullivan, labourer, died from an injury received on the head; one man arrested and tried, but acquitted.

1862.—Michael Bannon, farmer, murdered in a field near his own house. There had been a family dispute about his property. Mother-in-law arraigned at the assizes, but no bill found. Another member of the family tried at same assizes, but jury disagreed.

1863.—Peter Fielding, farmer, was returning home at night, and received a blow on the head, which proved fatal; five persons arrested, but no sufficient evidence.

Christopher Crosby, labourer, stabbed in the thigh, and died soon afterwards. Offender convicted; eighteen months' imprisonment, with hard labour.

Pat. Connor, carpenter, waylaid and beaten to death. He had given information to the magistrates, and was supposed therefore to be unpopular. Thirteen persons arrested, but discharged for want of evidence.

1864.—Peter Walsh, farmer, died from injuries received when attacked by an armed party; his father had rented land from which previous tenant had been evicted; four men were tried at assizes, but discharged.

1865.—Pat. M'Auley, labourer, died from a stab in the abdomen; a drunken quarrel; nine months' imprisonment, with hard labour.

1868.—James Howard Fetherston Haugh, Esq., J. P., shot dead at midnight, returning from Dublin to his residence; some time previously he had raised his rents; three men, arrested on suspicion, but ultimately discharged for want of evidence, and two of them have since emigrated to America.

1869.—Thomas Anketell, station-master at Mullingar, shot; died shortly afterwards; the cause, as some think, was traceable to ill-will entertained towards him on account of his faith, fulness, and determination in the discharge of his duty.

Patrick Murray and Patrick Byrne were fully committed for trial for the offence, but after having been in custody for nine months, were discharged at Spring Assizes, 1870, the Crown not considering the evidence sufficiently strong to send the case before a jury.

Captain Rowland Tarleton, of the King's County Militia, was shot dead by some person or persons unknown, who, it is believed, was or were concealed in an angle of the field through which he was passing; William and John Byrne (brothers), and Michael Dowd, nephew of the latter, and Thomas Hickey, were arrested, and subsequently discharged, for want of evidence.

1870.—Michael Kerigan, farmer, died from the effects of a gunshot wound, inflicted by some person unknown, who fired into his dwelling at night; he had taken five acres of land from a man named Austin, who afterwards repented the agreement, and the latter having attempted to resume forcible possession (in doing which he assuulted Kerigan) was summoned to petty sessions; it was there decreed that Kerigan should have the land; he shortly afterwards received a letter threatening him with death; Austin was arrested, but upon investigation, no sufficient evidence could be produced to warrant his detention; he was therefore discharged.

James Hiney, farmer, died from the effects of a blow on the head, inflicted in a drunken quarrel by some person when deceased was returning from the fair of Moate. Hiney remained speechless from the time he received the injury until he died. Luke Kelly, the suspected party, absconded, but afterwards surrendered himself, and was brought before the magistrates in petty sessions, but discharged from want of sufficient evidence to justify the case being sent to trial. There was an evident unwillingness on the part of the relatives of the deceased to prosecute, and the swearing was very contradictory.

Francis Dowling, an army pensioner, steward to Messrs. Perry, of Ballinagore Mills, when returning from his office in the evening, and about entering the gate-house where he resided, was fired at, and shot dead by some person unknown, who, from the impression made by his knee when taking aim, appears to have been concealed about two or three yards on Dowling's right. Four pellets struck Dowling. Deceased was an inoffensive man, and generally liked. About two years ago a man was dismissed from Messrs. Perry's employment. He was succeeded by Dowling. Revenge for this is the only motive assigned for the crime. Messrs. Perry have been three times noticed by threatening letters to discharge four persons, of whom Dowling was one; and about six months ago were informed that a man was told off to shoot Dowling. Two men were arrested (one of whom was the party dismissed), but both were discharged for want of evidence.

Appendix, No. 3. 1870.—Thomas Waters, process server, was found by a police patrol, one mile from Mullingar, at 11 o'clock p.m., shot dead; his body still warm. There were three bullet wounds in his left breast.

The Rev. Mr. Crofton, of Louth, about a month ago resolved upon evicting a notorious Ribbon leader, who had refused to pay an increased rent, but so great was the dread of this man that no one could be found to serve the ejectment notice. Waters at last undertook the task. His death deprives the landlord of proof that the notice was served, and the tenant in question will, in consequence, retain his farm for six months longer. It is believed that the crime was resolved on and carried out under the directions of the Ribbon conspiracy.

The police repeatedly warned deceased of the danger of associating with known members of that society, and frequently escorted him (contrary to his wish) part of the way home. These persons, all notorious Ribbonmen, were arrested. One of the three was seen drinking with Waters during the entire day of the murder. Three persons have since been discharged from want of evidence.

Appendix, No. 4.

PAPERS handed in by the Chairman.

COUNTY OF MEATH.—Spring Assizes, 1871. Appendix, No. 4.

REPORT of the Charge of the Right Honourable the Lord Chief Justice to the Grand Jury.

Trim, Monday, 27th February 1871.—Before Lord Chief Justice *Whiteside*.

CHARGE to GRAND JURY.

MR. FOREMAN, and Gentlemen of the Grand Jury, it is satisfactory to me to see so full an attendance of your Grand Jury, for it is important to the administration of justice that those who have a stake in the county should take a prominent part in the performance of that important duty. I congratulate you upon the state of the calendar, but I do so with moderation and caution. The cases actually returned for trial are few, and there is only one case, that of an assault on a bailiff, which may contain any principle of insubordination to the law. There are cases of larceny, &c., which need no particular comment from me. But, before I allude to the state of crime in your county, I may make an observation upon the Report of the Inspector General of Prisons. He appears to be a competent man, and he seems to think that you have laid out too much money on your gaol. He thinks it is too extensive, and that the management is too expensive, which is, he says, to be attributed to the faulty construction of the building. He gives a schedule of the crimes and sentences on prisoners, and observes that it appears that some habitual criminals frequent this district, who, under an improved prison system, would be removed to a central depôt, as in Scotland.

He finds that during the past year the number of females in gaol was 32, of whom 20 had been but once in custody, while 12 had 322 commitals recorded against them, showing how completely the female prisoners are confined to a few who are almost constantly in prison.

He then observes that it appears from the police returns that although female criminals are very few in the district, the number of beggars and destitute persons of that sex is very large.

He observes that the police returns prove that in this, one of the richest counties in Ireland, an unusually large number of the most destitute class exists, especially among females, who, although in the greatest poverty, still abstain from crime. Therefore it appears that whatever crimes have been committed in these counties, those crimes have not been committed by paupers.

He also observes that there is no place in your prison in which to keep children separate from adult criminals. That is an important observation, because if young persons be allowed to be in contact with hardened criminals, they will themselves become corrupted. There is another document to which I desire to invite your attention, and that is the very well-prepared report of the constabulary officer of your county. There is no use in keeping back the truth, and from this document shows that the class of persons who have been attacked in your county (and for outrages of this kind no one has been made amenable) are stewards, bailiffs, or owners of property. The document states that as Mr. Riggs, a land steward, in the employment of Mr. Battersby, was returning from Castlepollard, accompanied by his father and another person, two shots were fired by two men on the roadside, without, however, injuring anyone, and the constabulary officer thinks that the motive was because this man had performed his duty. That is not a satisfactory state of things in your county. There is another instance, that of a man named Bryan Callaghan, land bailiff to the Earl of Fingall, who, when returning from the fair of Navan, was assaulted by three men on the road, and, strange to say, although he was accompanied by three persons, they did not render him any assistance. It is said, in the Report, that possibly this man had prosecuted a tenant for cutting turf. That is another instance of an outrage on the high road, perpetrated on a man who was innocent of any offence except that of having done his duty to his employer. Under the head of "Malicious burnings," there is an instance of an unoccupied house having been burned, and the observation as to the motive is "dislike to the teward."

Appendix, No. 4.

There is also the case of a man named Mathew Reid, and it appears that a range of outhouses and a quantity of stock, altogether value for 1,000 *l.*, belonging to him, were set on fire and burned. The reason assigned in the report for this outrage is "being unpopular." Now that is so repulsive to all our notions, not only of law but of common humanity, that I have read it with pain. It seems, according to the notions of these lawless men, that if a man is unpopular, you may make away with him. That shows an unsatisfactory state of things; the more so, when we read, that although the police, as I firmly believe they did in this case, and in the others, made every exertion to detect the offenders, no person has, as yet, been made amenable. No reflection can be made upon the officials of this county for not doing that, which I quite believe they find to be impossible. There is a case of robbery of arms, in which the house of a man, named Robert Shiels, was forced open in the night by three men, who carried off a gun. It is not likely that such persons intended to make a right use of the weapon. It is observed in the Report that this farmer had been granted the protection of the police, and that in May last he had been fired at through the window of his own house. That is a most alarming description of outrage. There is another class of outrages, from which farmers, a most important class in an agricultural county, appear to suffer even more than the gentry. An instance of this happened to a man named Lennon. Three men went to his house, and demanded admittance. He refused; and was threatened with certain consequences if he continued to mow his corn. Two shots were fired, and the party left. There is another instance of outrage, accompanied by an act, for which, if the perpetrators were before me, there is no punishment allowed by the law which I would not feel it my duty to inflict. I allude to cases of intimidation by the administering of an unlawful oath. Eight men went to a farmer's house, administered to him an unlawful oath, and threatened to shoot him if he continued to speak disparagingly of Fenians or Ribbonmen. I should have liked to have seen the informations in this case. But it appears that the informations are not returned to the assizes where no person has been made amenable, and where it is hoped that more information may be obtained. Therefore I am only giving the results, accurately reported, I have no doubt, by such excellent authority as the constabulary of the county. This is a very serious offence, and shows a spirit of disaffection, which must be encountered by the strong arm of the law. In another case 12 men went to a man's house, and called upon him to give up a farm which he had taken and from which a tenant had been recently evicted. It appears they went there again and administered to him an unlawful oath to give up the farm. That is a daring outrage and ought to be a lesson to this man, and to others of his class, of what their fate would be if such persons got into power. The Report does not say whether he took the oath, but I infer that he did.

In another case, seven men went to a labourer's house, presented a revolver at him, assaulted his son and ran off. It is to be deplored that as yet, the offenders have not been brought to justice.

There are only two cases of sending threatening letters, which so far shows an improvement in the state of your county; of those, but one needs observation. It is that of a threatening letter sent to your station master; and this reminds me painfully of a circumstance which occurred about a year ago in a neighbouring county. Then, as I was returning from my assize duties, I saw a very respectable man on the platform of the railway station. In 48 hours afterwards I read of his assassination. Here the station master had simply done his duty, and I can only say that if the writer of that letter was now before me, and convicted, it would be a very long time before he would write another letter of the kind. It is a mistake to suppose that men who commit this offence cannot be reached by the law: and it is the feeling of every Member of the Bench that it is a cowardly offence, which causes great misery, and should be dealt with severely.

You cannot have better officials than you have in this county. It is impossible that you can have a more experienced and competent official than your Crown solicitor, and the other officials here. These officials state, that within the last six months there has been a great improvement in the state of this county, but still there are matters which show that it is still not satisfactory: for it is said that there are persons in this county, of your own rank, who cannot go far from their homes, or even attend the assizes here, without great danger of being shot. That is a horrible fact. It is dreadful to think that in this rich county, men should, for some supposed offences against them, lie in wait, day after day, watching, tiger-like, for an opportunity to assassinate their victims. Your county is not the worst on this circuit, for, I am sorry to say, the neighbouring county is still worse. I admire those who do yield to intimidation. I believe that these aggressors to be comparatively few, and that they are as well watched as they can be, by the police authorities here; but the fact, if it be a fact, that any man in your county should be afraid to follow his lawful calling, ought to awaken the attention of every well-wisher to his country, to see how he can best repress such insubordination and crime. There is no such safeguard as a firm administration of the law, and you will best discharge your duties by standing your ground and giving your best assistance to sustain those who are employed in endeavouring to preserve the peace, especially when the chief ruler of this county is, as I believe, most anxious to enforce the administration of the law and to obtain that tranquillity in the country, which every right-minded man desires.

LETTER from Mr. *Julian* to the Under Secretary. Appendix, No. 4.

Sir, Court House, Mullingar, 2 March 1871.

HAVING regard to the present state of the county of Westmeath, and to the action now being taken by the Government in relation to it, I thought it right to have a short-hand note taken of the charge to the grand jury of Chief Justice Monahan, which has been transcribed, and a copy of which is herein enclosed.

The grand jury inform me that they have telegraphed to the Government a resolution unanimously passed by this body in favour of such measures as the Government may think proper to take to meet the present disturbed state of the county.

The presentments made by the grand jury in the cases of the murder of Francis Dowling and Thomas Waters have been affirmed by the Chief Justice of the Common Pleas.

I have, &c.
(signed) *John Julian.*

Thos. H. Burke, Esq.,
Under Secretary, &c.,
Castle, Dublin.

COUNTY WESTMEATH—Spring Assizes, 2 March 1871.

CROWN COURT.

CHARGE of the JUDGE to the GRAND JURY of the COUNTY.

Chief Justice Monahan.] MR. HANDCOCK and gentlemen of the Grand Jury for the County of Westmeath, it is with very great regret indeed that I feel it to be my duty, looking over the returns furnished to me by the constabulary of the county, to say to you that the county is in such a state as to be a source of annoyance and grief to everybody who is interested in the welfare of it. When I was last here, gentlemen, the county was in an unpleasant state, but I indulged in the hope that things would mend; I find, upon the contrary, that things have proceeded from bad to worse, and that the county is in a state that it is almost impossible for me to conceive or to describe, and one cannot wonder that it has engaged the attention of Her Majesty's Government. I only trust and hope that the proceedings which are now being taken in Parliament will result in measures being devised that will be productive of improvement, and afford some safety to the inhabitants of this county. From the list before me, I find that in the months of November and December last, two men, one named Dowling, were shot, Dowling died immediately, his death being the result of the wound received by him. The other man, a police constable, named Waters, was also shot. There is likewise the case of a man named Heaney or Hiney, who was wounded and assaulted, which assault terminated in his death. With respect to the two cases in which these parties were shot, the misfortune and peculiarity of each case is, that although in all human probability the offender is known to many persons, no one will come forward with information or other assistance to lead to his conviction; and the assassins, whoever they may be, are at present at large. There are, in addition to these cases, some four cases, in which the intervention of Providence prevented them from being cases of murder. These are cases in which men were fired at and wounded. I shall not make the observations upon this case, which otherwise I would make, owing to the circumstance that in three of the cases the accused have been made amenable to justice; and therefore I do not like prejudging the case that you, gentlemen, shall have to investigate, and I possibly shall have to try, with the assistance of a petty jury. With respect to this case, gentlemen, I shall only say, your duty is a simple one, to hear, examine, and sift the evidence; and if the evidence satisfies you as to the identity of the accused party, to find true bills. This is the only question in the case. I have had upon previous occasions the honour and pleasure of your assistance; I am quite aware of your acquaintance with matters of this description. It is unnecessary for me to occupy your time, or the time of the public, by making any observations upon this case. There is in addition to the case of dreadful violence to which I have referred, several cases of very serious assault; in a few, a very few of these cases, the parties have been made amenable; in the other cases the persons injured have, in several instances, a disposition to come forward, but in consequence of the Reign of Terror existing in your county, the parties injured have not the confidence in the protection of the law, which justifies or enables them to come forward and aid in bringing the perpetrators to justice. In the same way there are some four or five cases of burning houses; most of these have not resulted from private injury, or from jealousy, but from agrarian crime. There are some cases of robbery, which will occur in almost all populous places, and in reference to which

Appendix, No. 4.

it is unnecessary for me to make any observation. There are some five or six cases of maiming cattle and sheep, through malicious motives. These cases always come together; where parties are assaulted, they have recourse to the houghing or otherwise injuring the property of the party who renders himself, for some reason or other, liable to the ill-will of bands of persons, who are leagued together for the violation of the law. There are also several cases of "appearing in arms," in none of which are the parties amenable. These parties go through the country almost undisguised; it therefore is impossible that they should not be known, and the only thing to be regretted is that, in some way or other, these parties have not been made amenable. There are also, gentlemen, some 45 cases of threatening letters. As we find in the other cases, very few of the offenders have been made amenable. I hope and trust there is not any want, gentlemen, of sufficient exertion, upon the part of the constabulary, in the detection of crime. I know that where the state of the country is such, very few people are willing to come forward, or assist in any way in the administration of the law, and that there are great difficulties in discovering the offenders. Still I hope that, as upon a former occasion, active exertions, and great ingenuity, were used by the constabulary in the discovery of the writer of a threatening letter, the same exertions will be made now. I tried the case, and the constable was deserving of great praise for the manner in which he acted. I only hope and trust, gentlemen, that similar exertions will be made for the purpose of discovering the writers of several of these threatening letters. I understand from some of the officers of police that some of the letters written in particular districts have been written by the same person. I hope and trust that a sufficient number of well-disposed persons in those districts will use every exertion to procure the genuine writing of the parties suspected. Gentlemen, of course it does not necessarily follow that the party so supposed to be guilty will turn out to be the writer of these threatening letters, or guilty of the offences laid to their charge; but, certainly every exertion should be used and every precaution taken to discover the persons who have been guilty of the commission of so serious an offence as that of writing a threatening letter. In addition to the culpability of the offence, the circumstance of so many offenders not having been discovered, it is to be regretted that this fact encourages so many people with the notion—a false notion, I hope—that they may commit crime with impunity. I have had many years' experience, in the discharge of my duty, of such cases as these; the result of which experience is, that although for a time, and in some instances, the unfortunate people escape justice, they will be overtaken ultimately by justice; and I have, indeed, found very few instances in which persons, at one time or another, have not been ultimately discovered, and then, when it is too late, they find the total uselessness and want of purpose in the offence which they have committed, and the crime in which they have been engaged. I do not feel, gentlemen, that it is in my power to say more; and I am precluded from entering more at large into the subject, and suggesting any means that may occur to me, to rectify the state of things; but I find persons who are more competent than I am who are investigating the matter, and who will come to some conclusion; but I hope that it will result in rendering this county, or some portion of the neighbouring county, that which in earlier times I recollect it to have been. I do not anticipate that you, gentlemen, will have any difficulty in discharging your duty, so far as finding the bills is concerned. Unfortunately it is the absence of bills, or the absence of evidence to bring home to the guilty party the crimes which they have committed, that has reduced your county to the state in which it is at present. If in the course of the investigation anything may occur to you, gentlemen, I shall be happy to give you any assistance in my power; at present all I shall say is, that you participate with me in the sincere regret that I feel at the state of your county, and the feeling of shame that it should be reduced to such a condition.

MEMORANDUM by Mr. *Seed*, Crown Solicitor.

THE following is a correct revelation, taken from authentic sources, of the Ribbon system as it exists in Ireland. There are few even in this country who can form any adequate notion of the system, and yet its meetings are held in many parts of the United Kingdom, especially in those large towns to which Irish resort.

There are five distinct orders in the society, 1st. The County Delegates; 2nd. The Parish Masters; 3rd. The Body Masters; 4th. the Committee Men; 5th. the mere Ribbonman. These closely resemble the military grades of colonel, captain, subaltern, serjeant, and private.

The County Delegate is elected by a majority of the parish masters connected with the county. The delegates meet quarterly, and their meetings are principally held in the large manufacturing towns, such as Manchester, Glasgow, Liverpool, &c.

At those meetings the passwords and signs (in the parlance of the society called "Goods,"), for the ensuing quarter are agreed on, and it is the duty of each delegate to disseminate them in his own district without delay; at those meetings, also, the place at which they are next to meet is always decided on. All such meetings are held in some public-house which has a private room. They gradually assemble, so as to attract no attention,

attention, and, when assembled, they appoint five or six of their own body to act as tylers, whose office it is to bring in such drink as they may order, pending their deliberations, and to exclude all who are not in full possession of the signs and passwords.

Having elected a chairman, their own wrongs and grievances, or those of their neighbours, are discussed; obnoxious landlord, agent, or bailiff, is placed on his trial, and, is pronounced guilty, sentenced by a majority of votes to such punishment involving death, or the destruction of property, as the case may seem to them to merit; and, when the doomed man is pronounced unfit to live, or to undergo a minor punishment, it is the duty of the delegates of the district in which he resides, to have that sentence carried into effect before the next quarterly meeting, and woe befall him if his mission be not performed. But although responsible for the sentence being carried into full effect, the means of doing so are supplied by another and (generally) distant district, so that, being strangers, if those who commit the murder or outrage escape immediate apprehension, there is little hope of their being identified.

The deed of blood is usually done in implicit obedience to command; but if the party commanded should demur, it is done by lot. If he escapes immediate detection, money is collected, and he is sent out of the country; if detected, he is supplied with means for his defence. At his trial, witnesses are also provided for him. The delegate necessarily incurs expense by attending the quarterly meetings. He is thus reimbursed; it is his duty to have some fit man to act as master in each parish; these are "parish masters," the second order.

On his return from the quarterly meeting, he calls a meeting of his parish masters at some fair or market, the signs and passwords agreed on at the meeting of delegates are communicated, and for them each parish master pays him the sum of 5 *s.*; this compensates him for his outlay, and even gives him a profit. The parish master requires to be reimbursed. He is bound to have within his parish a certain number at his command; they are called body masters, and form the third order. To each of them he gives the "goods," and from each he receives in return the sum of 1 *s.*

The body master has his duty to discharge, and has to select some twenty or thirty choice lads upon whom reliance can be placed. They are called committee-men, and form the fourth order. To them the "goods" are communicated, for which they pay the body master the sum of 6 *d.*

To the committee-men is entrusted, almost invariably, the execution of the sentence passed by the delegates.

The fifth grade is that of the ordinary Ribbonman, who, if he distinguishes himself by acts of outrage, waylaying, malicious injury to property, &c., is considered worthy of promotion.

The delegates, parish masters, and body masters, are the only persons who have authority to make a member, which is done by administering an oath, and this is always done in some retired place, such as the back of a ditch, no one ever being present except the person who administers the oath, and he who takes it, so that if information was given there could be no corroboration of the testimony. The signs and passwords now only remain to be noticed. They are contrived with great ingenuity, the latter being an allusion to some ordinary passing event, and of so simple a character as not to awaken suspicion.

The signs and passwords are generally changed every quarter.

There are three classes of passwords, which may be called the casual, the quarrelling, and the night words. The following were lately in use:—

Casual.—*Q.* What do you think of the times? *A.* We are expecting a change.—*Q.* Of what kind? *A.* Of the present Ministry.

Quarrelling.—Don't be contentious, Sir?—*A.* Not with you.

Night.—The clouds are heavy. *A.* A storm is at hand.

Signs.—The right hand rubbing the back of the head, the left thumb being in the left waistcoat pocket.

S. Seed,
Crown Solicitor.

Sarahville,
Killiney, 2 March 1871.

Appendix, No. 5.

PAPERS handed in by the Chairman.

Appendix, No. 5.

KING'S COUNTY.

RETURN of AGRARIAN OUTRAGES from 1st January 1870 to 28 February 1871.

N.B.—Those marked thus (*) have a Précis of the case herewith.

No.	Injured Persons.	Nature of Offence.	Proceedings, if any.
	January 1870.		
1	Margaret McBride	Threatening notice	nil.
2	Toler R. Garvey	ditto.	
3	John Byrne	Intimidation	Three men arrested and discharged.
4	Margaret Maher	Threatening letter	nil.
5	Michael Moran	Intimidation.	
6	Andrew Hoolan	Threatening letter.	
7	Michael Kehny	ditto.	
8	Edward Cunningham	ditto.	
	February 1870.		
9	E. Cunningham	Threatening letter	nil.
10	Margaret Donagher	Arson.	
11	John Byrne	Threatening letter.	
	March 1870.		
12	B. Beresford, Esq.	Threatening letter	nil.
13	Andrew Connolly	ditto	ditto.
14	Thomas Mullock	ditto.	
15	Terence Coyne	ditto.	
16	Patrick Clavin	Intimidation.	
17	T. Kelly, Esq.	Threatening letter.	
	April 1870.		
18	Patrick Clavin	Threatening letter.	
19	A. Connolly, Esq.	ditto.	
20	A. W. Costelloe	ditto.	
21	George Dixon	ditto.	
22	James Lowe	ditto.	
23, 24	Thomas Pretty, and Timothy Lawler	ditto.	
25	Minnock Thomas	ditto.	
	May 1870.		
26	Cornelius Fox	Intimidation.	
27	James Larkin	same.	
	June 1870.		
	Nil.		

KING'S COUNTY.—RETURN of Agrarian Outrages from 1 Jan. 1870 to 28 Feb. 1871—*continued.* Appendix, No. 5.

No.	Injured Persons.	Nature of Offence.	Proceedings, if any.
	July 1870.		
28	Thomas Winnock - - -	Threatening letter - -	- - nil.
	August 1870:		
29	Laurence Cantwell - -	Threatening letter - -	- - nil.
30	Terence Flanagan - - -	Intimidation - - -	- - nil.
	September 1870.		
	Nil.		
	October 1870.		
31	Cornelius Fox - - (*)	Attempt murder - -	*See* Précis.
32	R. Hunt - - - -	Threatening letter - -	- - nil.
	November 1870.		
33	Thomas Elcote - - -	Threatening letter.	
34	Same - - - - -	- - ditto.	
	December 1870.		
35	G. Rowe - - - -	Threatening letter.	
	January 1871.		
36	Stephen Stackpoole - -	Threatening letter.	
37	Thomas Maher - - -	- - ditto.	
38	J. Robbins - - - -	- - ditto.	
39	Michael and Mrs. Moran (*)	Attempt murder - -	*See* Précis.
	February 1871.		
40	Terence Flanagan - - -	Threatening letter.	
41	Simon Lynch - - -	- - ditto.	
42	G. Rowe - - - -	- - ditto.	

PRÉCIS of CASES referred to.

Attempt to Murder *Michael Moran.*—King's County, 15 January 1871.

(*See* Printed Return of Outrages for January 1871, page 2.)

MICHAEL MORAN, and his wife, Eliza Moran, when proceeding to prayers on an outside car, were fired at on the public road leading to the Chapel of Tubber, about 10.50 a.m., when Eliza Moran received injuries, from the effects of which her life is in danger. She was only married in June last, and is near her confinement. They had driven about a quarter of a mile, and when ascending a slight hill, Moran saw the heads of three men looking over the ditch of a field on the right side of the road. One of them wore something like a mask. He had passed the place about 20 yards, when three shots were fired; he was uninjured; looking back he saw one of the men, who was armed with a gun, attempting to reload. His wife then exclaimed she was wounded, and turning round he perceived her lying back on the car. When he looked towards the men again, he saw them running away towards the marsh or bog. Moran turned the car and drove home. His wife had received 11 gunshot wounds in the head and face—10 with slugs and large shot, the other with a bullet, which grazed her head and passed off. Moran cannot give a description of his assailants. His wife has ever since been too unconscious to be examined. Mary King, a servant of Moran, was seen by him in advance on the road. She states she saw three men, but can give no description. She made no signal to warn her master, who suspects that she aided in some degree the persons who planned the outrage. She is very intimate with a man named Rabbit, who is in custody. Pieces of newspaper were found on the road, which had been used as wadding, and tracks were discovered in the direction the assailants had taken. These were followed a considerable distance, but the men had passed out of view. The police could get no information,

Appendix No. 5. KING'S COUNTY.—RETURN of Agrarian Outrages from 1 Jan. 1870 to 28 Feb. 1871—*continued.*

formation, although the outrage was committed in a rather populous district; there were two houses within 100 yards of the scene. The inmates of these houses have been examined without any satisfactory result. A man named William Daly, cousin to Moran, had accompanied Mary King as far as one of these houses, into which he turned; he states he heard Moran's car passing, heard three shots, and saw three men running away, but can give no description. Three other men were seen by Moran about 500 yards from the place; they state they heard the shots, but saw no persons. The constabulary afterwards ascertained that several persons had observed the three offenders running away, when about a mile and a half from the place. No satisfactory evidence has been obtained from these persons. One of them, named John Dargan, first stated the offenders were 300 yards distant from him. He afterwards admitted he had actually spoken to them, but would give no clue to their identity. *Moran was* in possession of a farm of seven acres, which his father purchased from a man named Kelly, about 20 years ago. Kelly returned from America, and wanted to get back the land. Moran refused. Kelly went to live with people named Rabbit, and after some time again went to America. A threatening notice about this farm was received by Moran in November 1869. He was visited by an armed party, and further threatened in January 1870. Bernard, Patrick, and Timothy Rabbit, and James M'Donald are now under arrest on suspicion. From dread of the Ribbon Society in this district, no evidence can be obtained at present.

Shooting at and Wounding *Cornelius Fox.*—King's County, 30 October 1870.

(*See* Printed Return of Outrages for 1870, page 14.)

CON FOX, farmer, when going to chapel at Clara at 7.30 a.m., was met on the road by two men, who ordered him to go down on his knees, and, on his refusing, one of them fired at him with a revolver, lodging a ball in his chest. Fox caught hold of his assailant, and had a struggle with him, during which he received four additional wounds on the head, inflicted with the end of the pistol. The two offenders then walked quietly away, in sight of about 15 men who were digging potatoes in an adjoining field, and who took no notice of Fox's cries for help. Fox does not know the men, but says he could identify them. *There has been an unfriendly feeling between a family named Donohoe and Fox, as a Mrs. Donohoe was evicted, about 20 years ago, from the farm which Fox now holds.* As yet the offenders have not been discovered.

COUNTY OF MEATH.

RETURN of AGRARIAN OUTRAGES from 1st January 1870 to 28th February 1871.

N.B.—Those marked thus (*) have a Précis of the case herewith.

No.	Injured Persons.	Nature of Offence.	Proceedings, if any.
	January 1870.		
1	Henry Doughty	Threatening letter	One man arrested and bailed to stand his trial at next assizes.
2	James Meehan	same	nil.
3	Hugh Hanbury	same	nil.
4	Patrick Neville	same	nil.
5	Patrick Connolly	same	nil.
6	Thomas Bodker	same	nil.
7	Richard Kennedy	same	nil.
8	Walter Goodwill	same	nil.
9	Thomas Burn	same	nil.
10	Patrick Tallon	same	nil.
11	James Dyas	same	nil.
12	Bernard Dillon	same	nil.
13	James Daly	Intimidation	nil.
14	A. J. Walker	Threatening letter	nil.
15	Richard John Pigot	same	nil.

Appendix, No. 5.

MEATH.—RETURN of Agrarian Outrages from 1 Jan. 1870 to 28 Feb. 1871—*continued.*

No.	Injured Persons.	Nature of Offence.	Proceedings, if any.
	February 1870.		
16	James Gray	Threatening letter	nil.
17	Patrick M'Cormack and others	Intimidation	nil.
18	Owen Cooke	Threatening letter	nil.
19	John Rice	same	nil.
20	Bryan King	same	nil.
21	John Smart	same	nil.
22	Edward Gorman	same	nil.
23	Terance and	Intimidation by threats	nil.
24	Edward O'Brien		
25	Henry Atkinson	Threatening letter	nil.
26	Marquess of Headford	same	nil.
27	Bryan Callaghan	Intimidation	nil.
28	A. Browne	Threatening letter	nil.
29	Hugh Corcoran	same	nil.
30	Joseph Lewis	Administering illegal oath	One man arrested and under remand.
31	Andrew Tiernan	Threatening letter	nil.
32	Patrick Balfe	same	nil.
33	Patrick Balfe	Intimidation	nil.
34	H. Leighburne	Threatening letter	nil.
	March 1870.		
35	James Purst	Threatening letter	nil.
36	Richard Despard, Esq.	same	nil.
37	Andrew Gray	same	nil.
38	Denis O'Connor	same	One man arrested, and bailed for further examination.
39	Hugh Bropley	same	nil.
40	Employers of labourers	same	nil.
41	Garrett Gill	same	nil.
42	Timothy Leich	same	nil.
43	Patrick McCann	same	nil.
44	Mrs. and Miss Magan	same	nil.
45	Edward Dunne, and	Threatening notice	nil.
46	Graziers in general	same	nil.
47	Mrs. and Miss Magan	same	nil.
48	Thomas Elders	same	nil.
49	Thomas Rich	same	nil.
50	Patrick Fegan	Intimidation	nil.
51	Patrick Fegan	Administering illegal oath	nil.
52	William Reilly	Intimidation	Two men arrested; discharged; want of identification.
53	William Reilly	Levying money	
54	William Reilly	Firing into dwellings	
55	Charles Welby	Threatening letter	nil.
56	John Halpin	Intimidation	nil.
57	Richard McKeown	Threatening letter	nil.
58	Patrick Gavin	Intimidation	nil.
59	Joseph Laurie and Sons	Threatening letters	nil.
60	Henry Farrelly	Intimidation	nil.
61	Thomas Bradley	Administering illegal oath	nil.
62	Adam Cochrane	Intimidation	nil.
63	John Halpin	Levying money	nil.
64	Richard Pigott	Threatening letter	nil.
65	George Crawford	Firing into dwelling	nil.
66	Michael Halpin	Threatening letter	nil.
67	James Priest	same	nil.
68	John Ryan	same	nil.
69	William Woods	same	nil.
	April 1870.		
70	William Bond, Esq., and	Intimidation, and	
71	Terance Sheridan	Threatening letter.	
72	Andrew May	Same.	
73	Lawrence McGlew	Intimidation.	
74	John Radcliffe, Esq., J.P.	Attempt to murder	Two men arrested, and committed, and sentenced.

Appendix, No. 5.

MEATH.—RETURN of Agrarian Outrages from 1 Jan. 1870 to 28 Feb. 1871—*continued.*

No.	Injured Persons.	Nature of Offence.	Proceedings, if any.
	May 1870.		
75	Daniel Spring	Intimidated by an armed man.	One man arrested and discharged.
76	Christopher Connolly	Threatening notice.	
77	Thomas Fagan and Luke Fagan	Intimidation by firing a shot	
78	Same	Administering an illegal oath.	One man arrested, but discharged for want of evidence.
79	Same	Levying money.	
	June 1870.		
80	Hugh Hanbury	Threatening letter.	
	July 1870.		
	Nil	nil	nil.
	August 1870.		
	Nil	nil.	
	September 1870.		
81	Hugh Hanbury	Threatening letter.	
	October 1870.		
	Nil	nil.	
	November 1870.		
82	William Farrell	Threatening letter	nil.
	December 1870.		
	Nil	nil.	
	January 1871.		
	Nil	nil.	
	February 1871.		
83	Thomas Kiernan	Appearing armed and administering unlawful oath.	Four men arrested and discharged.

PRÉCIS of CASES Referred to.

Attempt to Murder *George Crawford.*—County of Meath, 27 March 1870.

(*See* Return of Outrages for 1870, page 15.)

GEORGE CRAWFORD, farmer, and agent to A. R. Maguire, Esq., was fired at on this night through a window, while sitting at his kitchen fire. He will lose the sight of his right eye, and his right cheek is severely lacerated. *Revenge for the eviction of a tenant* from Mr. Maguire's property in December 1868, when the father of the injured man was agent. One man was arrested on suspicion, but, after successive remands, was finally discharged. Mr. Crawford was awarded 300 *l.* by the grand jury as compensation for the injuries received.

MEATH.—RETURN of Agrarian Outrages from 1 Jan. 1870 to 28 Feb. 1871—*continued.* Appendix, No. 5.

Attempt to Murder *John Radcliffe*, Esq., J.P.—County of Meath, 23 April 1870.

(*See* Return of Outrages for 1870, page 15.)

JOHN RADCLIFFE, Esq., J.P., was fired at between one and two o'clock, p.m., as he was returning to his residence, Wilmount, from Kells. His horse was stopped by two men, one of whom discharged a pistol at him, without effect. Both were arrested, and fully identified by Mr. Radcliffe. They were tried at the Special Commission in June, and sentenced as follows:—Edward Gerty, penal servitude for life; John Brady, for 10 years. *James Gerty, brother to one of the prisoners had been committed to gaol a short time previously by Mr. Radcliffe, for having a sheepskin for which he could not account.*

COUNTY OF WESTMEATH.

RETURN of AGRARIAN OUTRAGES from 1st January 1870 to 28th February 1871.

N.B.—Those marked thus (*a*) have a précis of the case made out, which can be furnished if necessary.

Those marked thus (*) have a précis of the case herewith.

No.	Injured Persons.	Nature of Offence.	Proceedings, if any.
	January 1870.		
1	Edward Goodall - - (*a*)	Threatening letter - -	- - nil.
2	Same - - - - (*a*)	Intimidation - - -	- - nil.
3	Patrick McNamara - (*a*)	Administering illegal oaths -	- - nil.
4	Owen Colgan - - (*a*)	Threatening letter - -	- - nil.
5	Patrick Murray - - (*a*)	- - same - - -	- - nil.
6	Thomas Robinson - - (*a*)	- - same - - -	- - nil.
7	John Doran - - - -	Intimidation - - -	- - nil.
8	Mr. Seery - - - -	- - same - - -	- - nil.
9	Same - - - - (*a*)	Threatening letter - -	- - nil.
10	Wm. Ferguson - - (*a*)	- - same - - -	- - nil.
11	Ross Mahon, Esq. - (*a*)	- - same - - -	- - nil.
12	James Austin - - -	- - same - - -	- - nil.
13	Garratt Fagan and another (*a*)	Intimidation and firing shots	- - nil.
14	Thomas Fitzpatrick - (*a*)	- - same - - -	- - nil.
15	Philip Coyle - - (*a*)	- - same - - -	- - nil.
	February 1870.		
16	Thomas Nash - - -	Intimidation - - -	- - nil.
17	Bryan Farrell - - -	Threatening letter - -	- - nil.
18	Mary Seery - - - -	Threatening letter - -	- - nil.
19	John Ogle - - - -	Intimidation - - -	One man arrested.
20	M. G. Russell - - -	Threatening notice - -	- - nil.
21	R. Ball - - - -	Intimidation - - -	- - nil.
22	John Keeffe - - - -	- - ditto - - -	- - nil.
23	Geo. Gaynor - - -	Threatening notice - -	- - nil.
24	Sir R. Levinge and others -	- - same - - -	- - nil.
25	W. Casey - - - -	- - ditto - - -	- - nil.
26	Michael Kerrigan - - (*)	Murder - - - -	One man arrested.
27	Lawrence Hafford - - -	Intimidation - - -	- - nil.
28	Edward Dargan - - -	- - ditto - - -	- - nil.
29	Timothy Seery - - -	Threatening letter - -	- - nil.
30	A. Sutton - - - -	- - ditto - - -	- - nil.
31	W. Bell - - - -	- - ditto - - -	- - nil.
32	Edward Morton - - (*)	Attempted murder - -	- - nil.
33	Joseph Lynch - - (*)	- - ditto - - -	- - nil.
	March 1870.		
34	John Fox - - - - (*)	Attempted murder - -	Two men arrested and discharged.
35	Edward Morton - - -	Threatening letter - -	- - nil.
36	Bryan Farrell - - -	- - ditto - - -	- - nil.

Appendix, No. 5.

WESTMEATH.—RETURN of Agrarian Outrages from 1 Jan. 1870 to 28 Feb. 1871—*continued.*

No.	Injured Persons.	Nature of Offence.	Proceedings, if any.
	March 1870—*continued.*		
37	The Public	Threatening letter	nil.
38	Tenants of the Rev. W. Cook	ditto	nil.
39	Stephen Woods	Arson	nil.
40	Peter Murray	Intimidation	nil.
41	Danl. Bryan	Threatening letter	nil.
42	O. Colgan	Intimidation	nil.
43	Thomas Parker	ditto	nil.
44	R. M. Jemison, Esq.	ditto	nil.
45	Michael Moran	Threatening letter	nil.
46	Patrick Buckley	Intimidation	nil.
47	P. J. Boland	ditto	nil.
48	The Public	Threatening notice	nil.
49	S. Doran	Intimidation	nil.
50	Mrs. M. Martin	Threatening letter	nil.
51	Rev. Jas. Crofton (*)	Firing at	*See* Précis.
52	C. Stammell, Esq.	Threatening letter	nil.
53	The Public	ditto	nil.
54	Thomas Loughry	Intimidation	nil.
55	Chs. Cunningham	Administering illegal oath	nil.
56	P. Creighton	Intimidation	nil.
57	Same	Malicious injury	nil.
58	Peter McNamara	Intimidation	nil.
	April 1870.		
59	Andrew Dunne, and	Threatening notices	nil.
60	Matthew Gaffney		
61	Owen Colgan (a)	Threatening letter	nil.
62	Sir Percy Nugent	Arson	nil.
63	Michael Sheridan	Threatening letter	nil.
64	E. Hope, Esq.	Intimidation	nil.
65	John Martin	Threatening notices	nil.
66	Thomas Brachen		
67	Patrick Molloy		
68	Michael Brennan	Intimidation	nil.
69	The Public	Threatening notice	nil.
70	Peter Murray	ditto	nil.
	May 1870.		
71	John Egan	Threatening letter.	
72	James Keilly	Threatening notice.	
73	Thomas Parker	Threatening letter.	
74	Joseph Molly	ditto.	
	June 1870.		
75	Joseph Vaughan	Threatening letter	nil.
76	Same	same.	
77	Thomas Molloy, and	Intimidation by firing shots	Two men arrested and discharged.
78	Peter Murray		
	July 1870.		
79	Thomas Connor	Threatening letter	nil
80	Patrick Baker	same.	
	August 1870.		
81	Thomas Kelly	Intimidation.	
82	James Reilly	Killing cattle.	
	September 1870.		
83	S. Connor	Intimidation	One man arrested.
84	John Johnston (*)	Shooting at	*See* Précis.
	October 1870.		
85	Lawrence Keeffe	Intimidation.	

Appendix, No. 5.

WESTMEATH.—RETURN of Agrarian Outrages from 1 Jan. 1870 to 28 Feb. 1871—*continued.*

No.	Injured Persons.		Nature of Offence.	Proceedings, if any.
	November 1870.			
86	James Smith		Threatening letter.	
87	Thomas Plunkett		- - ditto.	
88	Patrick Plunkett		Intimidation.	
89	Stephen Connor		- - ditto	Two men arrested; one returned for trial.
90	Thomas Hackett, and John Carroll		- - ditto	Four arrested; one committed for trial for being of an armed party who fired on police; two sentenced to three months' imprisonment; one discharged.
91	Francis Dowling	(*)	Murder	*See* Précis.
	December 1870.			
92	Thomas Waters	(*)	Murder	Three men arrested and discharged.
93	S. H. Somers		Threatening letter	- - nil.
64	John Geoghegan		- - ditto.	
95	Michael Looran		- - ditto.	
96	Same		- - ditto.	
97	Peter Ryan		- - ditto.	
98	James Corcoran		- - ditto.	
	January 1871.			
99	Mary Ryland		Threatening letter.	
100	Thomas Bracken		- - ditto.	
101	S. Somers		- - ditto.	
102	Michael Kelly		- - ditto.	
103	James Daly		- - ditto.	
104	John Kelly		- - ditto.	
105	James Blagriff	(*)	Attempt murder	*See* Précis.
	February 1871.			
106	J. Blagriff		Threatening letter	
107	J. Geogheghan		- - ditto.	
108	M. Looran		- - ditto.	
109	N. Looran		- - ditto.	
110	James Fay		- - ditto	One man arrested.
111	James Daly		- - ditto	
112	Mary Fay		- - ditto	One man arrested.
113	Patrick Daly		Intimidation.	
114	Michael Gorman		- - ditto.	
115	Geo. Belton		- - ditto.	

Appendix, No. 5. WESTMEATH.—RETURN of Agrarian Outrages from 1 Jan. 1870 to 28 Feb. 1871—*continued.*

PRÉCIS of CASES referred to.

Murder of *Michael Kerrigan.*—County of Westmeath, 22 February 1870. (Death 24th.)

(*See* printed Return of Outrages for 1870, page 7.)

MICHAEL KERRIGAN, farmer, died from the effects of a gunshot wound, inflicted by some person unknown, who fired into his dwelling at night. *He had taken five acres of land from a man named Austin, who afterwards repented the agreement, and the latter having attempted to resume forcible possession (in doing which he assaulted Kerrigan), was summoned to Petty Sessions. It was there decreed that Kerrigan should have the land. He shortly afterwards received a letter threatening him with death.* Austin was arrested, but upon investigation, no sufficient evidence could be produced to warrant his detention. He was therefore discharged.

Shooting at *Edward Morton.*—County of Westmeath, 20 February 1870.

(*See* printed Return of Outrages for 1870, page 15.)

EDWARD MORTON, land steward, was fired at through a hole in a high wall, when proceeding to church at Clara (King's County). He was not injured, and continued on his way. Morton soon after received a threatening letter, stating that the hammer was oiling for him, and ordering him to leave the place, on pain of death. *He had assisted upon one occasion in seizing some goods* for rent due by a blacksmith, whose wife at the time made use of some threatening expressions; and upon another occasion *he had turned away a labouring man.*

Shooting at and Wounding *Joseph Lynch.*—County of Westmeath, 26 February 1870.

(*See* printed Return of Outrages for 1870, page 15.)

JOSEPH LYNCH, servant, when returning at night from Mullingar, was met by a man who ordered him to go down on his knees, and, on his refusing, called five others who were near at hand. Two of these advanced, and one fired a shot, lodging a bullet in Lynch's thigh; the other struck him on the head with a stick. Lynch was also kicked and seriously assaulted. *The only motive assigned for this outrage is, that Lynch is a servant of J. Hackett, who has lately taken a mill in the neighbourhood, and has thereby injured the business of other parties in the same trade.* Such was the view taken of the case at the time. At a later period of the year, the constabulary had reason to believe that Lynch's assailants mistook him for another person who was supposed to have been an informer. Lynch remained a short time in the County Infirmary, and was discharged in good health.

Shooting at *John Fox.*—County of Westmeath, 27 March 1870.

(*See* printed Return of Outrages for 1870, page 15.)

JOHN FOX, farmer, when driving home his cattle, saw a stranger advancing towards him; suspecting the man's purpose, Fox produced a pistol, and told him not to come nearer. The stranger also took out a pistol, and, saying he was not going to injure Fox, *desired him to give up 12 acres of land held by Fox, from which a man had been evicted for non-payment of rent three or four years ago, and who now wants to get this farm back.* Fox said he would not surrender it; and both having turned to walk away, the unknown man fired at Fox, but did not hit him. Fox pursued him some distance. Two persons were arrested, but, not being identified, were discharged. Fox gave up the land on the 19th March, and it remains still unlet.

WESTMEATH.—RETURN of Agrarian Outrages, from 1 Jan. 1870 to 28 Feb. 1871 - *continued.* Appendix, No. 5.

Shooting at and Wounding Rev. *James Crofton.*—County of Westmeath, 22 March 1870.

(*See* printed Return of Outrages for 1870, page 15.)

Rev. JAMES CROFTON, Protestant rector of Dunleer, when returning, at about 8 o'clock p.m., to Tyrrellspass from Clonfad, where he had been walking over his property, was met by two men, one of whom, after they had passed, fired at him with a pistol, the bullet inflicting a very slight wound on his shoulder. On Mr. Crofton turning round and demanding the reason of this outrage, both men fired at him. He then walked quickly away, and had gone but a short distance when one of the two again fired at him. Mr. Crofton followed, but could not overtake him, and on turning back was fired at by the second man from a ditch. None of the last four shots inflicted any injury. *Mr. Crofton had on the previous day informed his tenants that he intended increasing their rents, and that he would evict them if they did not pay the increase.* Two persons were arrested, but were discharged. Only one tenant was actually served with notice to quit.

Shooting at *John Johnston.*—County of Westmeath, 4 September 1870.

(*See* printed Return of Outrages for 1870, page 16.)

JOHN JOHNSTON, land steward, was fired at twice between the hours of two and three p.m., when returning from church, accompanied by his family. He was not injured. It was believed that the object of the outrage was simply to intimidate Johnston, *who had manifested strictness towards the labourers under his charge.*

Murder of *Francis Dowling.*—County of Westmeath, 25 November 1870.

(*See* printed Return of Outrages for 1870, page 8.)

FRANCIS DOWLING, an army pensioner, steward to Messrs. Perry, of Ballinagore Mills, when returning from his office in the evening, and about entering the gatehouse, where he resided, was fired at and shot dead by some person unknown, who, from the impression made by his knee when taking aim, appears to have been concealed about two or three yards on Dowling's right. Four pellets struck Dowling. Deceased was an inoffensive man, and generally liked. *About two years ago a man was dismissed from Messrs. Perry's employment. He was succeeded by Dowling. Revenge for this is the only motive assigned for the crime.* Messrs. Perry have been three times noticed by threatening letters to discharge four persons, of whom Dowling was one, and about six months ago were informed that a man was told off to shoot Dowling. Two men were arrested (one of whom was the party dismissed), but both were discharged for want of evidence.

Murder of *Thomas Waters.*—County of Westmeath, 29 December 1870.

(*See* printed Return of Outrages for 1870, page 8.)

THOMAS WATERS, process-server, was found by a police patrol one mile from Mullingar, at 11 o'clock p.m., shot dead; his body still warm. There were three bullet wounds in his left breast. *The Rev. Mr. Crofton, of Louth, about a month ago resolved upon evicting a notorious Ribbon leader, who had refused to pay an increased rent, but so great was the dread of this man that no one could be found to serve the ejectment notice. Waters at last undertook the task.* His death deprives the landlord of proof that the notice was served, and the tenant in question will in consequence retain his farm six months longer. It is believed that this crime was resolved on and carried out under the directions of the Ribbon conspiracy. The police repeatedly warned deceased of the danger of associating with known members of that society, and frequently escorted him (contrary to his wish) part of the way home. Three persons, all notorious Ribbonmen, have been arrested; one of the three was seen drinking with Waters during the entire day of the murder.

Appendix, No. 5. WESTMEATH.—RETURN of Agrarian Outrages, from 1 Jan. 1870 to 28 Feb. 1871—*continued.*

Attempt to Murder *James Blagriff.*—County of Westmeath, 23 January 1871.

(*See* printed Return of Outrages for January 1871, page 2.)

Mr. JAMES BLAGRIFF, farmer, was proceeding, about 4.30 a.m., on a car to the fair of Athlone, accompanied by his nephew, Thomas Mills, and had just got on the public road when he was fired at from behind a ditch. Blagriff called out to Mills to jump up and drive on, when a man leaped across the ditch into the field they had left, and fired a second shot from a pistol. The horse, frightened by the shots, galloped off, and the would-be assassin pursued the car along the field by the roadside, firing a third shot. None of the shots took effect, but Blagriff states the plug or bullet from the last whistled close by his head. He also asserts that, from the starlight and the view he got of the man from the flash of the second shot, to the best of his belief, it was Robert Black, jun., who fired it. *His father, Robert Black, senior, owes two and a half years' rent for a house and garden to Blagriff, who served him with a process. Black begged time till a fair, held on 20th instant, but had not paid the amount at the time of the outrage. Black was ejected eight or nine years ago for non-payment of rent of land which Blagriff now holds.* Robert Black, junior, arrested and remanded. C. 24,245.

Appendix, No. 6.

PAPER handed in by the Chairman.

COUNTY INSPECTOR'S REPORTS LAID BEFORE JUDGE OF ASSIZE.

County Inspector's Reports laid before Judge of Assize:

County of Westmeath: PAGE

Return of all Offences committed in the above County since Summer Assizes 1869 to Spring Assizes 1870, so far as the same have been Reported to the Constabulary - - - - - - - - - - 177

Return of all Offences committed in the above County since Summer Assizes 1870, so far as the same have been Reported to the Constabulary - - - - - - - - - - - - - 186

Return of all Offences committed in the above County since the last Spring Assizes, so far as the same have been Reported to the Constabulary - - - - - - - - - - - - - 192

King's County:

Return of all Offences committed in the above County since the last Assizes, so far as the same have been reported to the Constabulary, dated 8 July 1870 - - - - - - - - - - - - 198

Return of all Offences committed in the above County since the last Assizes, so far as the same have been reported to the Constabulary, dated 1 March 1871 - - - - - - - - - - - 204

COUNTY INSPECTOR'S REPORT laid before JUDGE of ASSIZE.

COUNTY OF WESTMEATH.

RETURN of all OFFENCES committed in the above County since Summer Assizes 1869 to Spring Assizes 1870, so far as the same have been Reported to the Constabulary.

No.	NATURE OF OFFENCE.	NAME OF INJURED PERSON.	Date of Offence.	Place where Committed, *i.e.*—Town or Townland. *Note.*—T. denotes "Town."	WHETHER RENDERED AMENABLE TO JUSTICE, AND THE RESULT IN EACH CASE.				
					If Informations have been Lodged, when? If not, why not?	Names of Persons Accused or Suspected.	Number of Attempts to Detect or Arrest the Offenders in each Case.	Names of Persons Arrested or made Amenable.	OBSERVATIONS AND RESULTS.
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
1	Homicide; shot	Michael Kerigan	22 Feb. 1870	Johnstown	Information, 23 Feb. 1870	Robert Austin	Several	Robert Austin	Motive: dispute about land let to deceased as grazing.
1	Firing at the Person	Martin Kelly	27 Nov. 1869	Ardmorney	Information, 27 Nov. 1869	None	3	None	No motive assigned, save that he is herd over a disputed farm.
2	Ditto	Edward Morton	20 Feb. 1870	Lismoymey	Information, 20 Feb. 1870	None	2	None	For faithful and strict discharge of his duty as steward to Mr. Armstrong, J. P.
3	Ditto	Joseph Lynch	26 Feb. „	Kathgowan	Information, 27 Feb. 1870	Patrick Donlon	2	Patrick Donlon	Motive: jealousy between two mill-owners as to trade.
1	Assault on Bailiff	Thomas Flynn	6 Dec. 1869	Boggagh	None; unnecessary	None	1	None	Motive: to deter from serving notices.
2	Assault on Police	Patrick Breslin	9 Jan. 1870	Fearmore	Information, 12 Jan. 1870	James and Thomas Murray.	1	James and Thomas Murray.	Bound to keep the peace six months.
3	Ditto	Patrick Breslin	16 Jan. „	Castlepollard T.	None as yet	Pat and John Fagan	2	Pat and John Fagan	Postponed at petty sessions.
1	Serious Assault	Edward Hafford	24 Jan. „	Grange	Information, 24 Jan. 1870	None	Several	None	Motive: for seducing a young girl.
2	Ditto	Thomas Bennett	9 Jan. „	Cloncreve	Information, 10 Jan. 1870	None	1	None	For having made remarks relative to a party who took his brother's gun.
3	Ditto	James Moran	10 July 1869	Clonkeen	Information, 12 July 1869	Pat and John Mahon, James, Pat, and John Quest, and William Mahon.	9	Pat, John, and William Mahon, and James, Pat, and John Quest.	Committed by an armed party; discharged at petty sessions for want of identification.
4	Ditto	Patrick Dillon	7 Nov. „	Carrickanaha	None; declined	Bartle Doyle and J. Malone.	2	Bartle Doyle and J. Malone.	Discharged for want of evidence.
5	Ditto	Edward Seery	13 Dec. „	Mount Temple	Information, 14 Dec. 1869	Pat Doyle and J. M'Knight.	2	Pat Doyle and J. M'Knight.	Assault by an armed party; Doyle for trial this assizes, &c.
6	Ditto	Patrick Fealy	19 Aug. „	Cooleen	Information, 21 August 1869	Peter Lusk	1	Peter Lusk	Fined 10*s.* and costs in petty sessions.
7	Ditto	Edward Seery	5 Sept. „	Legan	Information, 6 Sept. 1869	H. Minock and J. Scalby.	1	Minock and Scalby	Discharged, not identified.

RETURN of Offences committed in the County of *Westmeath* since Summer Assizes 1869 to Spring Assizes 1870, &c.—*continued.*

No.	NATURE OF OFFENCE.	NAME OF INJURED PERSON.	Date of Offence.	* Place where Committed, *i. e.*—Town or Townland. *Note.*—T. denotes "Town."	WHETHER RENDERED AMENABLE TO JUSTICE AND THE RESULT IN EACH CASE.				
					If Informations have been Lodged, when? If not, why not?	Names of Persons Accused or Suspected.	Number of Attempts to Detect or Arrest the Offenders in each Case.	Names of Persons Arrested or made Amenable.	OBSERVATIONS AND RESULTS.
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
8	Serious Assault -	Peter Gilloran - -	19 Sept. 1869	Rath, Upper -	None; declined - - -	- None - -	Several -	- None - -	Having cautioned some parties for coursing hares on master's land.
9	Ditto - - -	Peter Caughlin and Martin Brennan.	24 Dec. „	Moate, T. - -	Information, 25 Dec. 1869 -	J. and W. Callaghan and James Daly.	1	J. and W. Callaghan and James Daly.	For trial at this assizes, from the quarter sessions; dispute in lodging-house.
10	Ditto - - -	Marcella Boyhan and Patrick Boyhan.	29 Aug. „	Ballinderry - -	Information, 30 Aug. 1869 -	M. and O. Keena and Thomas Carey -	1	M. and O. Keena and Thomas Carey.	Acquitted at quarter sessions.
11	Ditto - - -	William Daly - -	30 Jan. 1870	Hanstown - -	None; declined - - -	P. Campbell - -	3	P. Campbell - -	Discharged at petty sessions.
1	Burning Stack of Oats	Thomas Malone - -	9 Sept. 1869	Ardyduffy - -	Information, 19 Sept. 1869 -	- None - -	2	- None - -	Obtained compensation.
2	Burning a House -	Patrick Donohoe - -	19 Nov. „	Kilbrennan - -	Information, 21 Nov. 1869 -	- None - -	Several -	- None - -	Family dispute about land.
3	Burning Cock of Hay	Thomas M'Guinness -	24 July „	Moate, T. - -	Information, 26 July 1869 -	- None - -	ditto - -	- None - -	Being cut with mowing machine.
4	Burning a House -	Pat M'Manus - -	16 Feb. 1870	Clonmore - -	Information, 19 Feb. 1870 -	- None - -	ditto - -	- None - -	Two cows burned to death, and two injured.
5	Ditto - - -	Warren B. Lee - -	16 Feb. „	Cullwnbeg - -	Information, 19 Feb. 1870 -	- None - -	ditto - -	- None - -	Discovered before much injury was done.
6	Burning House, and three Head of Cattle.	Mrs. Mary Cole, Rev. James Sayers, and James Tyrrell.	19 Feb. „	Mullingar, T. -	Information, 20 Feb. 1870 -	William Carey -	ditto - -	William Carey -	For trial this assizes. Motive: the accused was to be dispossessed on 21st February 1870, for non-payment of rent.
1	Burglary and House-breaking.	William Ormsby - -	8 Feb. „	Mullingar, T. -	Information, 9 Feb. 1870 -	Peter M'Loughlin -	1	Peter M'Loughlin -	For trial this assizes.
1	Robbery of Money -	Robert Sherwood - -	30 Aug. „	Mullingar T. -	Information, 31 August 1869 -	Patrick Madden -	1	Patrick Madden -	Ten years' penal servitude, quarter sessions.
2	Robbery of Oats, &c.	Jane Clinton - - -	4 Feb. 1870	Castlepollard -	Information, 9 Feb. 1870 -	Catherine Reynolds -	1	C. Reynolds - -	For trial at this assizes, &c.
1	Stealing two Sheep -	J. H. Armstrong - -	17 Aug. „	Ballycahan - -	Information, 21 August 1869 -	- None - -	Several -	- None - -	No motive assigned.
1	One Sheep Killed -	James O'Beirne - -	17 Jan. 1870	Corealy - -	Information, 17 Jan. 1870 -	- None - -	ditto - -	- None - -	To deter from taking land.
2	Stabbing a Horse -	Edward Hannon - -	30 Oct. 1869	Cummerstown -	Information, 1 Nov. 1869 -	- None - -	ditto - -	- None - -	No motive can be assigned.
1	Sacrilege - -	Parishioners - - -	9 Jan. 1870	Tobberclair - -	None; declined - - -	- None - -	ditto - -	- None - -	Took a few articles of trivial value.
2	Ditto - - -	- ditto - - -	17 Jan. „	Tobberclair - -	- ditto - - -	- None - -	ditto - -	- None - -	China and glass flower stands.
1	Demand, or Robbery of Arms.	Patrick Simon - -	28 Sept. 1869	Ballinaskeagh -	Information, 27 Sept. 1869 -	- None - -	Frequent -	- None - -	Four men armed, took gun by force.
2	Robbery of a Carbine	Private Mercell, 14th Hussars.	24 Oct. „	Kinnegad - -	Information, 25 Oct. 1869 -	- None - -	ditto - -	- None - -	Soldiers were billeted in the village.
3	Robbery of a Gun -	Patrick Bennett - -	1 Jan. 1870	Cloncrae - -	Information, 2 Jan. 1870 -	- None - -	ditto - -	- None - -	Four men armed, took gun by force.

4	Demanding a Gun	John Seery	8 Nov. 1869	Fearmore, South	None; declined	None	Several	None	A dislike to Seery's son.
5	Robbery of a Gun	Thomas Ryan	27 July „	Newtown	Information, 28 July 1869	None	ditto	None	Committed by an armed party.
6	Ditto	Edward Cole	21 Nov. „	Ardnacrina	None; declined	None	ditto	None	Committed by an armed party, who fired shots inside and outside house.
1	Appearing Armed	The Queen	20 Feb. 1870	Rathmore	Information, 21 Feb. 1870	Patrick Dalton Edward Donohoe John Wier Patrick Cormack Patrick Dalton	1 1 1 1 1	Patrick Dalton Edward Donohoe John Weir Patrick Cormack Patrick Dalton	Met by police or patrol marching in military order: For trial at this assizes. Discharged, want of sufficient evidence.
2	Carrying Arms	The Queen	5 Dec. 1869	Simonstown	Information, 29 Dec. 1869	Christy Newman	1	Christr. Newman	For trial at this assizes.
3	Ditto	The Queen	13 Feb. 1870	Clonegeragh	Information, 16 Feb. 1870	Patrick Halpin	1	Patrick Halpin	Bailed for trial at assizes.
4	Appearing Armed	James Murray	24 July 1869	Ardballymore	Information, 25 July 1869	Joseph M'Gawly Peter Condron	1 1	Joseph M'Gawly Peter Condron	To deter him to give up land; discharged for want of evidence.
5	Ditto	Thomas Dunbar	5 Nov. „	Rahanine	None; declined	None	1	None.	
6	Ditto	James Hughes	5 Dec. „	Castlelost	Information, 7 Dec. 1869	James Weir, Pat. Grehan, C. Core, D. M'Keon, C. Mooney, and James Garland	1 1 1 1	James Weir, Pat. Grehan, C. Core, D. M'Keon, Christopher Mooney, and James Garland.	Agrarian outrage to deter him to give up land; discharged for want of sufficient evidence; not identified.
7	Ditto	John Ogle	22 Nov. „	Shurock	Information, 25 Nov. 1869	None	Several	None	No motive assigned in this case; supposed agrarian; he was cautioned.
8	Ditto	Richard Browne, Timothy Seery, and William Seery.	9 Dec. „	Ardborow	Information declined	None	ditto	None	Agrarian. To deter to give up land from which a man was evicted five years ago.
9	Ditto	James Kelly	17 Dec. „	Mullinmeehan	None; declined	None	ditto	None	Agrarian; to deter to give up land.
10	Ditto	John Doran	16 Jan. 1870	Aughafin	None; declined	None	ditto	None	Agrarian; to deter him to give up farm.
11	Ditto	John Ogle	13 Feb. „	Shuroch	Information, 14 Feb.	William Daly, William, James, and John Magan, Bernard Rabbit, and E. Shanly.	2	William Daly, William, James, and John Magan, Bernard Rabbit, and E. Shanly.	Agrarian. Motive: to deter him to give up two acres of land. Discharged, not identified.
12	Ditto	Pat. Connolly, H. Duffy, Rose Duffy, and Mary Connor.	7 Dec. 1869	Cappentack and Ballinahinch.	None; declined	None	Several	None	To deter from paying increased rent.
13	Appearing armed (20 men).	Peter M'Namara, Widow Moran, and Denis Newman.	1 Nov. 1869	Ballygarvy	Information, 2 Nov. 1869	None	Frequent	None	To deter from paying increased rent.
14	Ditto	Lawrence Hafford	20 Feb. 1870	Grange	None; declined	None	ditto	None	Having assisted as bailiff in ejecting some tenants for non-payment of rent three years ago.
1	Administering Oaths unlawfully.	James M'Cue	11 Dec. 1869	Ballycloughduff	None; declined	None	Several	None	A man, armed, swore Mrs. McCue to leave her husband's house, as she and McCue's first wife's children quarrel.
2	Administering Oath, unlawfully, by an Armed Party.	Peter M'Namara	29 Dec. 1869	Ballygarvy	Information, 29 Dec. 1869	None	ditto	None	Swore him as to whether he had paid the increased rent. Motive: to deter the landlord.
1	Threatening Letter	Const. R. Clasdon	21 Sept. 1869	Rathconrath	None; declined	None	ditto	None	For prosecuting parties for drunkenness.

RETURN of all Offences committed in the County of *Westmeath* since Summer Assizes 1869 to Spring Assizes 1870, &c.—*continued.*

No.	NATURE OF OFFENCE.	NAME OF INJURED PERSON.	Date of Offence.	Place where Committed, i.e.—Town or Townland. *Note.*—T. denotes "Town."	WHETHER RENDERED AMENABLE TO JUSTICE, AND THE RESULT, IN EACH CASE.				
					If Informations have been Lodged, when? If not, why not?	Names of Persons Accused or Suspected.	Number of Attempts to Detect or Arrest the Offenders in each Case.	Names of Persons Arrested or made Amenable.	OBSERVATIONS AND RESULTS.
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
2	Threatening Letter	Rev. M. Braddle	9 Oct. 1869	Leny	Information, 9 October 1869	None	Several	None	Having discharged two servants.
3	Ditto	John Naughten	29 Oct. „	Kilbixy	None; declined	None	ditto	None	For having broken a cross in graveyard.
4	Ditto	John O'Beirne	15 Nov. „	Coreally	Information, 16 Nov. 1869	William Gavin	ditto	None	To deter from dispossessing from land, &c.
5	Ditto	E. Goodall	2 Jan. 1870	Redmondstown	None; declined	ditto	ditto	None	To deter from paying rack-rent.
6	Intimidation, personal	E. Goodall	5 Jan. „	ditto	ditto	ditto	ditto	None	Threatened by a man armed.
7	Threatening Letter	James Austin	5 Jan. „	Parcelstown	Information, 5 January 1870	ditto	ditto	None	To deter him to give up eight acres of land.
8	Ditto	Mary Seery	20 Jan. „	Lockardstown	None; declined	ditto	ditto	None	Agrarian; to deter to give up land.
9	Ditto	Michael Hope	3 Sept. 1869	Gartlandstown	ditto	ditto	1	None	ditto ditto.
10	Ditto	William B. Smythe, J.P.	24 Sept. „	Barbavilla	Information, 23 October 1869	Eliza M'Manus	4	Eliza M'Manus	For trial this assizes; dispossessed with compensation; agrarian outrages.
11	Ditto	Anthony Sutton	24 Sept. „	Collinstown					
12	Ditto	Thomas Veldon	24 Sept. „	Gilliardstown					
13	Threatening Notices	The Public	2 Nov. „	Stonestown, Gilliardstown and Collinstown.	None	None	2	None	Agrarian; to deter from taking grass land.
14	Threatening Letter	Christopher Ball	6 Nov. „	Archerstown	None; declined	None	1	None	Motive: to deter to dismiss a miller.
15	Ditto	The Public	19 Dec. „	Fearmore	None	None	2	None	Agrarian; to deter taking land.
16	Ditto	William Evans	21 Dec. „	Gilliardstown	None; declined	None	1	None	ditto ditto.
17	Ditto	Thomas Robinson	17 Jan. 1870	Ballinasloe	ditto	None	2	None	Agrarian; to give up land.
18	Ditto	Anthony Sutton	13 Feb. „	Collinstown	ditto	None	1	None	Agrarian, relative to conacre.
19	Intimidation; Armed Party.	Thomas Nash	30 Jan. „	Collinstown	Information, 31 January 1870	None	2	None	Agrarian; to give up land.
20	Threatening Notice Posted.	The Public	29 Aug. 1869	Clonmellon	None; declined	Mrs. Evans	Several	None	To deter from mowing oats.
21	Ditto	The Public	31 Oct. „	Delvin District	ditto	None	Constant	None	Agrarian; to deter landlords.
22	Threatening Letters	R. S. Fetherston and H. James Johnston.	20 Nov. „	Ballinaca	ditto	John Nowlan	Frequent	None	To deter him to discharge his steward, being strict over workmen.
23	Threatening Notices, three.	The Public	5 Dec. „	Delvin District	ditto	None	Constant	None	Agrarian; to deter taking land.
24	Threatening Letter	Bartle Hope	1 Feb. 1870	Lisclougha	Information, 2 February 1870	Family named Byrne	Frequent	None	To deter from building a forge.
25	Intimidation; Armed Party.	Richard Ball	13 Feb. „	Clonmellon	None; declined	ditto	Several	None	Agrarian; to deter from taking land.
26	Intimidation; Firing a Shot.	John Keeffe	30 Jan. „	Corbettstown	Information, 16 February 1870	Christopher Flynn	ditto	None	ditto ditto.
27	Threatening Lettter	Rev. Thomas Wetherall and John Burke.	12 Feb. „	Kinnegad	Information, 19 February 1870	John Reynolds, Michael Fells, and Thomas Coffey.	ditto	None	To deter from shooting over certain lands.
28	Ditto	John Reilly	13 July 1869	Corr	Information, 14 July 1869	Darby Laffy and Patrick Johnston.	ditto	None	Having as bailiff served notices.
29	Ditto	Peter Rush	13 July „	Corr	None; declined	ditto	ditto	None	To deter from taking land.
30	Ditto	David Ferrier	9 Aug. „	Athlone	ditto	None		None	To deter from selling agricultural implements.

31	Ditto	J. W. Maunsell	2 Aug. 1869	Killinure	ditto	None	Several	None	To deter him to discharge his herd.
32	Ditto	Ditto	25 Sept. „	Ditto	ditto	None	ditto	None	Threatening him with death.
33	Threatening Notice	Patrick E. Murphy, J.P.	2 Oct. „	Ballaghkeeran	ditto	None	ditto	None	Caution to tenants not to pay rent, until an abatement would be made.
34	Four Threatening Notices.	Landlords generally	10 Oct. „	Glasson District	ditto	None	ditto	None	Caution to tenants not to pay rent; threatened landlords who refused just concessions to their tenants.
35	Threatening Notices	Ditto	17 Oct. „	Drumraney	ditto	None	ditto	None	- - ditto - - ditto.
36	Ditto	Ditto	22 Oct. „	Glasson	ditto	None	ditto	None	- - ditto - - ditto.
37	Threatening Letters	Wm. H. Gray, J.P.	23 Oct. „	Walderstown	ditto	None	ditto	None	To deter him to lower his rents, and restore tenants he put out.
38	Intimidation; Armed Party.	Patrick Murray	31 Oct. „	Lisdachoh	Information; 2 Nov. 1869	None	ditto	None	Agrarian; to deter to give up land.
39	Threatening Notice	Marcus Goodbody	31 Oct. „	Muckenagh	None; declined	None	ditto	None	Caution to his tenants not to pay rent.
40	Ditto	Thomas Parker	31 Oct. „	Rath	ditto	James Grourke	ditto	None	To deter him to give up land.
41	Ditto	John Hodgson	2 Nov. „	Twyford	ditto	None	ditto	None	Intimidation as to his steward.
42	Ditto	David Ferrier	8 Nov. „	Athlone, T.	ditto	None	ditto	None	To deter from selling agricultural tools.
43	Intimidation; Firing a Shot.	John Farrell	8 Nov. „	Ardnagragh	ditto	None	Frequent	None	Motive; having told their landlord, who received a threatening letter, that they had no complaint as to rent.
44	Ditto	Honora Naughton	8 Nov. „	Ditto	ditto	None	ditto	None	- - ditto - - ditto.
45	Ditto	John Moran	8 Nov. „	Ditto	ditto	None	ditto	None	- - ditto - - ditto.
46	Intimidation by a Man.	J. W. Maunsell	12 Nov. „	Killinure	ditto	None	ditto	None	There was a man seen in yard at night.
47	Threatening Letter, and Firing a Shot.	Michael Fallon	9 Nov. „	Mount Temple	ditto	None	ditto	None	To deter from paying his rent.
48	Threatening Notice	P. E. Murphy, J.P.	14 Nov. „	Drumraney	ditto	None	ditto	None	To deter his tenant paying him rent.
49	Threatening Letter	Miss Chaigneau	28 Nov. „	Farrannamoreen	ditto	Peter Mulvihill	ditto	None	To deter to discharge her gardener.
50	Threatening Letter, and Firing a Shot.	Patrick Conlon	22 Nov. „	Creeva	ditto	None	ditto	None	To deter him from paying rent.
51	Threatening Letter	Hon. C. Handcock	15 Dec. „	Creaghduff	ditto	None	ditto	None	To deter doing his duty as an agent.
52	Personal Threat, Armed Party.	Michael Fallon	17 Dec. „	Mount Temple	ditto	None	ditto	None	To deter from paying rent.
53	Threatening Letter	Mrs. Chaigneau	29 Dec. „	Farrannamoreen	ditto	None	ditto	None	To deter to discharge her gardener.
54	Ordered to leave the Country by a Man Armed, and face black.	William Dooley	30 Dec. „	Killinure	Information, 3 December 1869	None	ditto	None	Having seduced a young woman.
55	Threatening Letter	Pat Murray	20 Dec. „	Lisdachon	None	None	ditto	None	To deter to give up a farm of land.
56	Ditto	Ross Mahon	6 Jan. 1870	Bunown	None	None	ditto	None	To deter to give up land.
57	Intimidation; Armed Party.	Mary A. Shanby	2 Feb. „	Brackagh	None	None	ditto	None	To deter to discharge a servant boy.
58	Threatening Letter	William Payne	26 July 1869	Tyrrellspass	None	None	Frequent	None	Agrarian; relative to a farm.
59	Threatening Notice	William Dobbyn William Bagnell Henry Lee	8 Aug. „ 8 Aug. „ 8 Aug. „	Ballymaone Ditto Ditto	None	Labourers in locality	ditto	None	To deter from using or letting for hire mowing machines; labourers of the locality suspected.
60	Ditto	William Dobbyn, William Bagnell, and Henry Lee.	15 Aug. „	Cornaher	None	ditto	Several	None	To deter from using or letting for hire mowing machines.
61	Ditto	Charles Flanagan	25 Aug. „	Miltown	None	ditto	ditto	Non	To deter from mowing corn.

RETURN of all Offences committed in the County of *Westmeath* since Summer Assizes 1869 to Spring Assizes 1870, &c.—*continued.*

No.	NATURE OF OFFENCE.	NAME OF INJURED PERSON.	Date of Offence.	Place where Committed, i.e.—Town or Townland. *Note.*—T. denotes "Town."	WHETHER RENDERED AMENABLE TO JUSTICE, AND THE RESULT IN EACH CASE.				
					If Informations have been Lodged, when? If not, why not?	Names of Persons Accused or Suspected.	Number of Attempts to Detect or Arrest the Offenders in each Case.	Names of Persons Arrested or made Amenable.	OBSERVATIONS AND RESULTS.
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
62	Threatening Notice	Patrick Scalby	30 Oct. 1869	Rahugh	None; declined	None	Several	None	To deter doing his duty as game-keeper.
63	Ditto	Mary Connolly	3 Nov. „	Kilbeg	ditto	None	ditto	None	To deter from rebuilding a forge.
64	Threatening Letters	Owen Colgan	21 Nov. „	Ballyhast	ditto	None	ditto	None	Agrarian; to deter taking land.
65	Ditto	Patrick Donohoe	10 Dec. „	Cloonagh	ditto	None	ditto	None	To deter from taking house and land.
66	Ditto	Owen Colgan	6 Jan. 1870	Ballyhast	ditto	None	ditto	None	To deter from letting a farm.
67	Ditto	Henry Thompson	10 Jan. „	Cloonagh	ditto	None	ditto	None	To deter from doing his duty as steward.
68	Ditto	Mark Russell	2 Aug. 1869	Nahidmore	ditto	None	Frequent	None	To deter him to give up meadow land.
69	Threatening Notice	J. Thomas Lawder	14 Aug. „	Cartrons	ditto	James Horan	ditto	None	For having discharged a herd.
70	Ditto	Thomas Lawder	19 Aug. „	Cartrons	ditto	Pat. and Jas. Horan	ditto	None	To deter him to discharge his herd.
71	Threatening Letter	Timothy Daly	2 Sept. „	Moate, T.	ditto	Jno. and Jas. Maldoon	ditto	None	Motive: for reduction of rent on property over which he is bailiff; people cautioned not to pay rent.
72	Threatening Notice	Ditto	26 Sept. „	Boggagh	ditto	Stephen Duffy	ditto	None	ditto ditto.
73	Threatening Letter	Ditto	1 Oct. „	Moate, T.	ditto	None	ditto	None	ditto ditto.
74	Ditto	Sir John Ennis	11 Oct. „	Ballinahown	ditto	None	ditto	None	Motive: to extort money.
75	Threatening Notice	Thomas Hamilton	16 Oct. „	Bishopstown	ditto	Edward M'Loughlin	ditto	None	Caution not to pay increased rent.
76	Ditto	John Bond	21 Oct. „	Ballinlug	ditto	Jno. Hinds, Jno. Fitzsimon.	ditto	None	ditto ditto.
77	Ditto	Landlords generally	23 Oct. „	Moate, T.	ditto	None	ditto	None	Tenants not to pay rents until justice is done.
78	Ditto	Thomas Moran	15 Nov. „	Lisavara	ditto	None	ditto	None	To deter to give up a farm.
79	Threatening Letter	John Ogle	21 Nov. „	Shurock	ditto	John Brennan	ditto	None	For having discharged a servant.
80	Ditto	Mark Russell	26 Nov. „	Nahidmore	ditto	None	ditto	None	To deter him to give up land.
81	Ditto	Patrick Curly	5 Dec. „	Shurock	ditto	None	ditto	None	To deter, as herd, to leave.
82	Threatening Notice	Bernard Casey	7 Dec. „	Ballinahinch	ditto	None	ditto	None	Warned not to pay his rent.
83	Ditto	H. J. Doran	7 Dec. „	Kilbellaghan	ditto	None	ditto	None	Caution not to offer more than fair rent.
84	Threatening Letter	Edward Coloe	18 Dec. „	Arduacrina	ditto	None	ditto	None	To deter from bailing a man for money.
85	Ditto	Brian Farrell	4 Feb. 1870	Laragh	Information, 5 February 1870	Matt Kenagham	1	None	To deter to give up land he took 20 years ago.
86	Ditto	Mark Russell	13 Feb. „	Nahidmore	ditto	None	Frequent	None	Agrarian; relating to land.
87	Ditto	George Gaynor	16 Feb. „	Tully	ditto	None	ditto	None	Agrarian; to deter to give up land.
88	Threatening Notice	Nathaniel Lowe	19 Feb. „	Ballinamudagh	ditto	None	ditto	None	Dispute about car-way to a bog.
89	Ditto	The Public	1 Nov. 1869	Crazycorner	ditto	None	Several	None	To deter from taking land.
90	Threatening Letter	Thomas Hill	27 Nov. „	Ballynagall	None; declined	None	ditto	None	Having dismissed a labourer.
91	Ditto	Dr. J. Ferguson	29 Dec. „	Petit's Wood	ditto	None	ditto	None	To deter to lower his rents.
92	Ditto	William Casey	20 Feb. 1870	Habsboro	ditto	None	ditto	None	To deter to give up a farm.
93	Threatening Notice	Sir R. Levings and five of his tenants.	20 Feb. „	Loughegan	ditto	Redmond Chill	Frequent	None	Having let land from which a man was dispossessed in April 1868.

1	House Attack; Armed Party.	Mary Seery	1 Jan. 1870	Lockardstown	Information, 1 April 1870	None	Several	None	To deter to give up a farm. Afforded police protection.
2	Ditto	Christr. Ball	16 Nov. 1869	Archerstown	Information, 17 Nov. 1869	Jno. Smith, M. Gaffney, Jno. Walsh, and Thos. Brett.	4	Jno. Smith, M. Gaffney, Jno. Walsh, and Thos. Brett.	To deter to discharge his miller. Discharged; not identified.
3	House Attack; Armed Party; Robbery of Arms; Assault, and Administering an Oath.	Mat. and Garret Fagan, Philip Coyle, and Thos. Fitzpatrick	16 Jan. 1870	Hemonotstown	Information, 17 Jan. 1870	None	5	None	Agrarian: to give up land in their possession, &c.
4			16 Jan. „	- ditto	- ditto	None	5	None	
5			16 Jan. „	- ditto	- ditto	None	5	None	
6	Attacking House by Armed Party of 30 Men.	E. Dorgan, B. Seary, R. M'Cormick, and Pat. Nolan	20 Feb. 1870	Cummerstown	None as yet	None	4	None	Agrarian: to deter from paying advance of rent.
7			20 Feb. „	Christianstown					
8									
9									
10	Attacking House	William Shiel	5 Sept. 1869	Brianbeg	None; declined	None	Several	None	Motive: family dispute.
11	Ditto	Michael Roon	30 Nov. „	Collierstown	ditto	None	ditto	None	Motive: having discharged a servant.
1	House Levelling	Mary Connolly	11 July 1869	Kilbeg	Information, 13 July	None	Frequent	None	To prevent owner continuing it as a blacksmith's forge.
1	Injury to Gate	Mark Murray, Patrick Connell, and Christy Keeffe.	29 Aug. „	Killogh and Griffinstown.	None; declined	Mich. Jordan, Jno. Rock, Patrick Mulligan, and J. Mulligan.	ditto	None	Motive: for cutting down corn with mowing machine and not by reapers, as labourers would have it.
2	Injury to a Dog	James Gorry	14 Oct. „	Toorlisnamore	Information, 16 Oct. 1869	None	Several	None	No motive: compensation sought.
3	Breaking Windows	Margaret Palmer	21 Dec. „	Kilbeggan T.	None, declined	None	ditto	None	No motive assigned.
4	Breaking Greenhouse	G. A. R. Boyd, J. P.	25 Dec. „	Middleton Park	ditto	None	ditto	None	To deprive a labourer of situation.
5	Breaking of Dwelling	Margaret Palmer	28 Dec. „	Kilbeggan T.	ditto	None	ditto	None	No motive assigned.
6	Jaunting Car Broken	Pat. Cahill	14 Feb. 1870	Mullingar T.	Information, 15 July 1870	None	ditto	None	Thrown over railway bridge, on rails; train came in collision, and broke it.
1	Firing into Dwelling	Peter M'Namara	1 Nov. 1869	Ballygarry	Information, 2 Nov. 1869	None	ditto	None	To deter from paying rise of rent.
2	Ditto	Laurence Stafford	29 Feb. 1870	Grange	Information, 26 Feb. 1870	None	ditto	None	Having assisted to dispossess people.
3	Ditto	John Farrell, Honora Naughton, and John Moran.	8 Nov. 1869	Ardnagragh	None; declined	None	ditto	None	For having told their landlord that they had no complaints.
4									
5									
6	Ditto	Catharine Donohue	5 Feb. 1870	Ardivahan	ditto	None	ditto	None	Motive: robbery of arms.
7	Ditto	T. and William Seery, Richard Browne.	9 Dec. 1869	Ardboro'	ditto	None	Frequent	None	To deter to give up land.
8	Ditto	John Flynn	20 Feb. 1870	Coolure	ditto	None	2	None	No motive assigned.
1	Attempt to Injure Train.	M. G. W. Railway Company.	7 Dec. 1869	Kilpatrick	ditto	None	Several	None	Stone thrown which injured one of the carriages.

County Inspector's Office, Mullingar, 28 February 1870.

F. J. Heath, County Inspector.

RETURN of all Offences committed in the County of *Westmeath*

SUMMARY.

NATURE OF OFFENCE.		Number of Offences.		Number of Cases in which Depositions were taken.		Number of Cases in which the Offenders were unknown.	Number of Injured Persons who declined to Lodge Informations at all.
		Since last Assizes.	Offences of a previous Date for which Arrests were made within the Period of this Return.	In which Persons were Named or Charged.	In which Persons were not Named.		
OFFENCES AGAINST THE PERSON	Homicide	1	–	–	1	–	–
	Firing at the Person	3	–	–	3	3	–
	Conspiracy to Murder	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Administering Poison	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Rape, and Felonious Assault on Females	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Infanticide, and Concealing Birth	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Abduction	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Assault on Police, Bailiffs, &c.	3	–	1	–	–	1
	Serious Assaults	11	–	6	–	3	3
	Desertion of Children	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Unnatural Crime	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Bigamy	–	–	–	–	–	–
OFFENCES AGAINST PROPERTY	Arson and Incendiary Fire	6	–	1	5	5	–
	Burglary and Housebreaking	1	–	1	–	–	–
	Highway and other Robberies	2	–	2	–	–	–
	Taking and holding Forcible Possession	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Cattle and Sheep Stealing	1	–	–	1	1	–
	Killing, Cutting, or Maiming Cattle	2	–	–	2	2	–
	Sacrilege	2	–	–	–	2	2
	Levying Contributions	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Piracy	–	–	–	–	–	–
OFFENCES AFFECTING THE PUBLIC PEACE	Demand or Robbery of Arms	6	–	–	4	6	2
	Appearing Armed	13	–	5	4	7	4
	Faction Fights	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Riots and Affrays	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Administering Oaths Unlawfully	2	–	–	1	2	1
	Threatening Notices or Letters, and Intimidation	93	–	1	10	92	82
	Pound Breach	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Turning up Land	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Attacking Houses	11	–	–	3	10	6
	Resistance to Legal Process	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Illegal Meetings or Processions	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Levelling	1	–	–	1	1	–
	Injury to Property, Plucking Sheep, &c.	6	–	–	2	6	7
	Firing into Dwellings	8	–	–	2	8	8
	Injury to Places of Worship	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Party Demonstrations	–	–	–	–	–	–
OTHER OFFENCES	Combination	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Prison Breaking, and Aiding Escape of Prisoners	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Injuring or attempting to Injure a Railway Train	1	–	–	–	1	1
	Ribbonism	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Coining	–	–	–	–	–	–
	TOTALS	173	–	17	39	149	117

MINOR OFFENCES NOT

Summary Convictions	
Cases sent to Trial	
Cases Dismissed	
Cases in which no Proceedings have been taken before Magistrates	
TOTALS	

Mullingar, 28 February 1870.

since Summer Assizes 1869 to Spring Assizes 1870, &c.—*continued.*

SUMMARY.

Number of Persons Arrested within the Period of this Return.			Number of Accused or Suspected Persons.				Number of Persons Arrested by the Constabulary, within the Period of this Return, for Offences Committed in England, Wales, and Scotland.	Number of Cases in which Trial was Postponed at Quarter or Petty Sessions.	Number of Cases for Trial at this Assizes.	Number of Persons for Trial at this Assizes.	
For Offences within this Period.		For Offences of a former Period.	Convicted at Quarter Sessions.	Convicted Summarily.	Discharged for want of sufficient Evidence.	Acquitted.				For Offences Committed within the Period of this Return.	For Offences of a former Period.
Without Sworn Information.	Upon Sworn Information.										
1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	–	–	–
1	–	–	–	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	–
–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
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4	–	–	–	2	–	–	–	1	–	–	–
20	–	–	–	1	12	3	–	–	2	4	–
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1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	1	–
2	–	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	1	1	–
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21	–	–	–	–	15	–	–	–	3	6	–
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–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
56	–	–	1	3	32	3	–	2	9	14	–

SPECIALLY REPORTED.

Common Assaults.	Larcenies.	Intoxication.
143	21	626
2	6	—
57	8	27
59	23	—
261	58	653

F. J. Heath, County Inspector.

COUNTY OF WESTMEATH.

RETURN of all OFFENCES committed in the above County since Summer Assizes 1870, so far as the same have been reported to the Constabulary.

No.	NATURE OF OFFENCE.	NAME OF INJURED PERSON.	Date of Offence.	Place where Committed, *i. e.*—Town or Townland. *Note.*—T. denotes "Town."	WHETHER RENDERED AMENABLE TO JUSTICE, AND THE RESULT IN EACH CASE.				
					If Informations have been Lodged, when? If not, why not?	Names of Persons Accused or Suspected.	Number of Attempts to Detect or Arrest the Offenders in each Case.	Names of Persons Arrested or made Amenable.	OBSERVATIONS AND RESULTS.
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
1	Homicide (assaulted, died from the effects).	James Hincy	3 Oct. 1870	Teorphelum	Information, 6 Dec. 1870	Luke Kelly and John Kelly.	4	Luke Kelly	This arose out of a drunken row, and dispute about land. Accused was discharged; 12 witnesses who were present having failed to prove the offence before magistrates.
2	Homicide (shot dead)	Francis Dowling	25 Nov. „	Ballinagore	Information, 26 Nov. 1870	William and Jos. Malowney.	Several	William and J. Mullowney.	Having succeeded William Malowney in the situation of steward to Mr. Perry. Discharged; want of sufficient evidence.
3	Ditto	Thomas Waters	29 Dec. „	Robinstown Levinge	Information, 30 Dec. 1870	James Melia, Patrick Murray, and Bernard Creevy.	ditto	James Melia, Patrick Murray, and Bernard Creevy.	Motive: to prevent proof of service of an ejectment notice on a notorious Ribbonman. The accused were discharged for want of sufficient evidence to put them on trial.
1	Firing at the Person	Constable John Walsh	24 Nov. „	Jernacrieve	Information, 25 Nov. 1870	James Daly	1	James Daly	This was one of an armed party; after committing two outrages, met by police. For trial at this assizes.
2	Ditto	Constable C. Supple	16 Jan. 1871	Raharney	Information, 18 Jan. 1871	Laurence Bray	1	Laurence Bray	Motive: activity and zeal in his duty. For trial at this assizes.
3	Ditto	James Blagriff	23 Jan. „	Lisdochan	Information, 24 Jan. and 6 Feb. 1871.	Robert Black, jun.	1	Robert Black	For not giving up a farm of land, and having served an ejectment process. For trial at this assizes.
4	Ditto	John Johnston	5 Sept. 1870	Killagh	Information, 6 Sept. 1870	John Mulligan	Frequent	John Mulligan	Motive: for strictness, as steward, with workmen. Discharged; want of evidence.
1	Infanticide and Concealing Birth.	An infant child	12 Feb. 1871	Ballymore	Information, 14 Feb. 1871	None	ditto	None	Motive: to conceal the birth.
2	Ditto	Male infant	17 Feb. „	Athlone, T.	None	None	ditto	None	Verdict: exposure to cold caused death.
1	Serious Assault	Patrick Keogh and Owen McManus.	21 Aug. 1870	Finea Village	Information, 22 August 1870	John Rodgers	1	John Rodgers	Motive: jealousy about a young woman. Acquitted at quarter sessions.
2	Ditto	Pat Galligan	12 Oct. „	Hamondstown	Information, 16 Oct. 1870	Michael Gillick	1	Michael Gillick	For trial at this assizes.
3	Ditto	James Murtagh	18 Sept. „	Bleauphuttogue	Information, 19 Sept. 1870	James Gaffney None	1 Several	James Gaffney None	Discharged; not identified. Motive: to deter him bringing his second wife into the house he got by his first wife; supposed to be a family affair.

4	Ditto - - -	Michael Kelly - -	4 Nov. „	Rathgarret - -	Information, 4 Nov. 1870 -	Thomas and Christopher Doyle.	1	Thomas Doyle -	Tried at petty sessions. Sentence, one week.
5	Serious Assault, Stabbing.	James Brien - - -	3 Oct. „	Moate, T. - -	Information, 4 Oct. 1870 -	Patrick Donnegan -	1	Christopher Doyle - Patrick Donnegan -	Discharged by magistrates. For trial at this assizes.
6	Serious Assault -	John Hollely - - -	21 Nov. „	Rathduff - -	- - None - - -	- None - -	4	- None - -	Intimidation; to prevent him employing Dublin men to cut timber.
1	Arson and Incendiary Fire.	Pat Malady - - -	20 July „	Correally - -	Information, 21 July 1871 -	- None - -	Several -	- None - -	Refused to join "Martinites" at election.
2	Stack of Oats Burned	William Gaynor - -	3 Dec. „	Bunahinly - -	Information, 4 Dec. 1870 -	- None - -	ditto - -	- None - -	No motive has been assigned, save that he is a pensioner.
3	Arson and Incendiary Fire.	William Reddy - -	2 Jan. 1871	Castlelost - -	Information, 3 Jan. 1871 -	- None - -	ditto - -	- None - -	No motive; compensation sought, but it appears Reddy took land previous.
4	Herds House Burned	John Quite - - -	22 Nov. 1870	Newtown - -	Information, 23 Nov. 1870 -	John Mahon - -	ditto - -	John Mahon - -	Motive: having discharged his herd. Mahon was discharged; want of evidence.
1	Burglary and Robbery	Patrick Allen - -	28 Oct. „	Shinglass - -	None; declined - - -	- None - -	4	- None - -	Motive: robbery; son-in-law suspected.
2	Ditto - - -	Rev. J. Ringwood - -	2 Feb. 1871	M. Farnham -	Information, 10 Feb. 1871 -	John Sullivan - -	4	John Sullivan - -	For trial at this assizes.
1	Highway and other Robberies.	John Fegan - - -	26 Nov. 1870	Faughalstown -	Information, 30 Nov. 1870 -	Catherine Emmett -	1	Catherine Emmett -	Case for trial at this assizes.
2	Ditto - -	John Robinson - -	25 Jan. 1871	Ballinaloe - -	Information, 25 Jan. 1871 -	John Browne - -	1	John Browne - -	Case for trial at this assizes.
3	Robbery of a Watch	Thomas Williams - -	15 July 1870	Athlone, T. - -	Information, 15 July 1870 -	Michael Davis -	1	Michael Davis -	Acquitted at quarter sessions.
1	Cattle and Sheep Stealing.	Edward Lee - - -	24 Oct. „	Cornaher - -	Information, 28 Oct. 1870 -	- None - -	Several -	- None - -	Every exertion made without effect.
2	Ditto - - -	Christopher Bracken -	28 Oct. „	Frevenagh - -	Information, 28 Oct. 1870 -	Michael Horan -	ditto - -	Michael Horan -	Convicted at quarter sessions, and sentenced to 12 months' imprisonment with hard labour.
1	Killing four Sheep -	James Reilly - - -	8 Aug. 1870	Empor - -	Information, 8 August 1870 -	- None - -	Several -	- None - -	No motive assigned; but this man received a threatening letter in March 1870 about land.
2	Killing one Sheep -	Dominick Nugent - -	13 Aug. „	Russagh - -	Information, 13 August 1870 -	- None - -	ditto - -	- None - -	Having prevented a man from crossing his field some short time ago.
3	Ditto - - -	Edward Luby - -	9 Dec. „	Muckenagh - -	Information, 13 Dec. 1870 -	- None - -	ditto - -	- None - -	Doubtful case; compensation sought.
4	Cow Poisoned - -	John Johnston - -	25 Jan. 1871	Clonbonny - -	Information, 30 Jan. 1871 -	- None - -	ditto - -	- None - -	No motive assigned in this case.
5	Heifer Stabbed -	Thomas Ledwith - -	23 Oct. 1870	Correagh - -	None; declined - - -	- None - -	ditto - -	- None - -	Revenge for having prosecuted parties (Ribbonmen) for assaulting his son.
1	Demand or Robbery of Arms.	Michael Clinton - -	30 Jan. 1871	Shrubbywood -	Information, 1 Feb. 1871 -	- None - -	Frequent -	- None - -	An armed party (Ribbonism), they found and carried off one double gun.
2	Ditto - - -	L. W. Monaghan - -	4 Sept. 1870	Coxtown -	Information, 10 Sept. 1870 -	- None - -	ditto - -	- None - -	Party of five men armed with revolvers; they found and carried off a double gun.
3	Ditto - - -	Patrick Kelly - -	10 Nov. „	Curramore - -	Information, 11 Nov. 1870 -	- None - -	Several -	- None - -	Two men, one of them armed, demanded and carried off one single gun (Ribbonism).
1	Appearing Armed -	Patrick Phillips - -	31 July 1870	Mitchellstown -	Information, 1 August 1870 -	- None - -	Frequent -	- None - -	Intimidation (three men, two of them armed) to deter him to leave his situation.
2	Ditto - - -	William Farrell - -	27 Nov. „	Clonbore - -	Information, 7 Dec. 1870 -	Laurence Bray -	ditto - -	- None - -	To deter him to give up some land; four men, armed, put him on his knees.

RETURN of all Offences committed in the County of *Westmeath* since Summer Assizes 1870, &c.—*continued.*

No.	NATURE OF OFFENCE.	NAME OF INJURED PERSON.	Date of Offence.	Place where Committed, i.e.—Town or Townland. *Note.*—T. denotes "Town."	WHETHER RENDERED AMENABLE TO JUSTICE, AND THE RESULT IN EACH CASE.				
					If Informations have been Lodged, when? If not, why not?	Names of Persons Accused or Suspected.	Number of Attempts to Detect or Arrest the Offenders in each Case.	Names of Persons Arrested or made Amenable.	OBSERVATIONS AND RESULTS.
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
3	Appearing Armed	Thomas Connally	23 Aug. 1870	Williamstown	Information, August 1870	John Mulligan	Frequent	None	Intimidation; by two men armed, who fired shots, to deter him to leave his work.
4	Ditto	Laurence Keeffe	23 Oct. „	Crawnonstown	Information, 24 October 1870	None	ditto	None	Two men armed, fired two shots to deter him to give an abatement of rent.
5	Ditto	Andrew Magrath	14 Aug. „	Taghmon	Information, 21 August 1870	None	ditto	None	Intimidation; to force him to leave the situation of herd, which was sought for by the son of former herd who had died.
6	Ditto	Patt. Gaffney	17 Jan. 1871	Newtown	Information, 21 January 1871	None	Several	None	To force a herdsman to leave his place, from which a former herd had been dismissed. Prior to this outrage, herd's house was burned, 22 November 1870.
1	Threatening Letters, &c.	Thomas Cormick	12 July 1870	Caskeran	None; declined	None	Several	None	Agrarian; family dispute about land.
2	Ditto	Thomas Murtagh	7 July „	Tobercormick	ditto	None	ditto	None	To deter from putting out a herd.
3	Ditto	Rev. J. B. Grant	2 Aug. „	Killahugh	ditto	None	ditto	None	To deter from keeping Protestant servants.
4	Ditto	J. H. Kelly, J.P.	13 Jan. 1871	Lunestown	ditto	None	ditto	None	Intimidation as to getting a farm.
5	Ditto	James Smyth	8 Nov. 1870	Clonegoragh	ditto	None	ditto	None	Having served notice to quit on a cotter.
6	Ditto	Michael Mangan	13 Feb. 1871	Archerstown	Information, 13 Feb. 1871	None	ditto	None	To deter from taking situation of herd.
7	Ditto	J. F. Briscoe, J.P.	5 Nov. 1870	Grangemore	Information, 7 Nov. 1870	Peter Leech	Frequent	Peter Leech	To deter to give Leech employment; discharged; want of evidence.
8	Ditto	William M'Lean	14 July „	Lissywallen	None; declined	None	ditto	None	Having discharged a servant.
9	Ditto	James Blagriff	1 Feb. 1871	Lisdochan	ditto	None	ditto	None	To deter from prosecuting at assizes a person who fired at him.
10	Ditto	Patrick Baker	16 July 1870	Cloneyhague	ditto	None	ditto	None	To deter from working for M. Brennan.
11	Ditto	Richard Coffey	28 July „	Newcastle	ditto	None	ditto	None	For having discharged a steward.
12	Ditto	William Bannon	1 Sept. „	Cuminstown	ditto	None	ditto	None	For replacing a dismissed herd.
13	Ditto	Peter Ryan	17 Oct. „	Cloonagh	ditto	None	ditto	None	Agrarian outrage; no results.
14	Ditto	Michael Looram	26 Nov. „	Cuminstown	ditto	None	ditto	None	To deter to give up seven acres of land purchased so far back as 28 years ago.
15	Ditto	James Corcoran	1 Dec. „	Kilbrennan	ditto	None	ditto	None	Agrarian; no results.
16	Ditto	John Geoghegan	4 Dec. „	Cuminstown	ditto	None	ditto	None	Ditto - ditto.
17	Ditto	Michael Looram	7 Dec. „	Ditto	ditto	None	ditto	None	Ditto - ditto.
18	Ditto	Messrs. H. & M. Perry	17 Dec. „	Knockycosker	Information 17 Dec. 1870 and 21 Jan. 1871.	None	ditto	None	Steward and clerk discharged; no results; to prevent the employment of any other but the man dismissed.
19	Ditto	Thomas Oakes	17 Dec. „	Tyrrellspass	None; declined	None	ditto	None	For acting as steward, &c., to Messrs. Perry in place of the man dismissed.

20	Ditto	Samuel H. Somers	23 Dec. „	Ditto	ditto	None	ditto	None	Agrarian; no results.
21	Ditto	William Kelly	6 Jan. 1871	Cloneyhague	ditto	None	ditto	None	Ditto - ditto.
22	Ditto	James Ryan	7 Jan. „	Ballykilroe	ditto	None	ditto	None	To deter him to give up herding.
23	Ditto	Mary Ryland	11 Jan. „	Torque	ditto	None	ditto	None	Agrarian; no results.
24	Ditto	James Daly	12 Jan. „	Cornaher	ditto	None	ditto	None	Ditto - ditto.
25	Ditto	Thomas Bracken	18 Jan. „	Ballinderry	ditto	None	ditto	None	Ditto - ditto.
26	Ditto	Samuel Somers	20 Jan. „	Tyrrellspass	ditto	None	ditto	None	Ditto - ditto.
27	Ditto	John Geoghegan	4 Feb. „	Cuminstown	ditto	None	ditto	None	Ditto - ditto.
28	Ditto	Nicholas Looram	4 Feb. „	Ditto	ditto	None	ditto	None	Ditto - ditto.
29	Ditto	George Belton	4 Feb. „	Cloohagh	ditto	None	ditto	None	Ditto - ditto.
30	Ditto	Michael Looram	4 Feb. „	Cuminstown	ditto	None	ditto	None	Ditto - ditto.
31	Ditto	James Daly	11 Feb. „	Cornaher	ditto	None	ditto	None	Ditto - ditto.
32	Ditto	Thomas Plunkett	11 Nov. 1870	Bishopstown	Information, 30 Nov. 1870	Michael Cormick - 1		Michael Cormick	Agrarian; for trial these assizes.
33	Ditto	Thomas Glavey	30 Nov. „	Tullaghaushaulin	None; declined	None - 3		None	To deter from becoming a herd.
34	Ditto	Simon Boland	7 Dec. „	Moate, T.	ditto	None - 4		None	Boland himself strongly suspected.
35	Ditto	James and Mary Fay	12 Jan. 1871 10 Feb. „	Bishopstown	Information, 13 Feb. 1871	Michael Cormick - 2		Michael Cormick	Agrarian; for trial these assizes.
36	Ditto	William Molloy, Inspector of National Schools.	12 Oct. 1870	Mullingar, T.	None; declined	Ditto	Several	None	Having caused dismissal of school teachers.
37	Ditto	John Nugent	17 Nov. „	Newdown	Information, 19 Nov. 1870	Ditto	ditto	None	No motive can be assigned.
38	Intimidation by Threats	Michael Gorman	4 Feb. 1871	Knockmant	Examined at petty sessions	Ditto	Frequent	None	To deter to give up 12 acres of land.
39	Ditto	Thomas Kelly	20 Aug. 1870	Cloneyhague	Information, 20 August 1870	Thomas Hughes and P. Burton. 2		Thomas Hughes Patrick Burton	To deter to leave his employment. Discharged for want of evidence.
40	Ditto	John Bailey	27 Oct. „	Ballykilroe	None; declined	None	Several	None	Agrarian; no results.
41	Ditto	Thomas Hackett	24 Nov. „	Raheenmore	Information 25 Nov. 1870	David M'Keon - 1		David M'Keon	Agrarian; not identified, but M'Keon and Mooney got three months' imprisonment under sect. 23 Parliamentary Peace Preservation Act.
		John Carroll	24 Nov. „	Ditto	ditto	Christy Mooney, and 1 Thomas Costello 1		Christy Mooney Thomas Costello	
42	Ditto	Stephen Connor	14 Sept. „	Shinglass	Information 16 Sept. 1870	James Hanlon - 6		James Hanlon	Agrarian; for trial at assizes.
		Celia Connor	14 Sept. „	Ditto	Ditto				
43	Ditto	Ditto	28 Oct. „	Ditto	Information 30 Oct. 1870	James Kenny - 1 Michael Mulligan 1		James Kenny	Agrarian; for trial these assizes.
44	Ditto	John Casey	7 Dec. „	Cloncullen	None; declined	None - 1		None	To deter from purchasing straw from a man selling it contrary to his son's wishes.
45	Ditto	Patrick Daly	20 Feb. 1871	Clare	ditto	None - 1		None	Agrarian; to deter him to give up 59 acres of land in possession for the last 20 years. The offender was armed with a revolver, fired a shot into the hedge, and then left.
1	House Attack	Patrick Coffey, Edward Maxwell, Michl. Lynch, John Ryan, and Andrew O'Connor.	11 Dec. 1870	Sheefin	Information, 13 Dec. 1870	None - 1		John Crum, Christopher Lennon, Michael Curran, and Andrew Plunkett.	Intimation to deter and force a miller or kilnman to leave his employment in Mr. Coffay's mill; for trial at these assizes.
1	Firing into Dwellings	James Frayne	9 Dec. „	Rockfield	Information, 10 Dec. 1870	None	Several	None	For taking possession of a small cabin, formerly held by an old woman, who gave it up of her own free will.
2	Ditto	John Roseman	2 Jan. 1871	Tonagh	None; declined	None	ditto	None	1st. Having discharged two workmen; 2nd. Having refused to go bail for rent; 3rd. That his wife's friends got it done, as he threatened to cut her off to 30 *l.* in will; this man is of very intemperate habits.
1	Injury to Property	Thomas Quinn, J. P.	15 Nov. 1870	Kilbeggan	Information, 18 Nov. 1870	None	Frequent	None	The coping of a boundary wall maliciously thrown down; 1 *l.* compensation granted at special sessions; no motive assigned.

Constabulary Inspector's Office, Mullingar, 27 February 1871.

F. J. Heath, S. C. I.

RETURN of all Offences Committed in the County of *Westmeath*, since Summer Assizes, 1870, &c.—*continued.*

SUMMARY.

NATURE OF OFFENCE.		Number of Offences.		Number of Cases in which Depositions were taken.		Number of Cases in which the Offenders were Unknown.	Number of Injured Persons who Declined to Lodge Informations at all.
		Since last Assizes.	Offences of a previous Date for which Arrests were made within the Period of this Return.	In which Persons were Named or Charged.	In which Persons were not Named.		
OFFENCES AGAINST THE PERSON.	Homicide	3	–	2	1	1	–
	Firing at the Person	4	–	3	1	1	–
	Conspiracy to Murder	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Administering Poison	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Rape, and Felonious Assault on Females	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Infanticide, and Concealing Birth	2	–	–	1	2	1
	Abduction	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Assault on Police, Bailiffs, &c.	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Serious Assaults	6	–	2	3	2	1
	Desertion of Children	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Unnatural Crime	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Bigamy	–	–	–	–	–	–
OFFENCES AGAINST PROPERTY.	Arson and Incendiary Fire	4	–	–	4	3	–
	Burglary and Housebreaking	2	–	1	–	2	1
	Highway and other Robberies	3	–	3	–	–	–
	Taking and holding Forcible Possession	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Cattle and Sheep Stealing	2	–	–	1	1	–
	Killing, Cutting, or Maiming Cattle	5	–	–	4	5	1
	Sacrilege	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Levying Contributions	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Piracy	–	–	–	–	–	–
OFFENCES AFFECTING THE PUBLIC PEACE.	Demand or Robbery of Arms	3	–	–	3	3	–
	Appearing Armed	6	–	–	6	6	–
	Faction Fights	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Riots and Affrays	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Administering Oaths Unlawfully	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Threatening Notices or Letters and Intimidation	45	–	4	6	38	35
	Pound Breach	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Turning up Land	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Attacking Houses	1	–	1	–	–	–
	Resistance to Legal Process	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Illegal Meetings or Processions	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Levelling	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Injury to Property, Plucking Sheep, &c.	1	–	–	1	1	–
	Firing into Dwellings	2	–	–	1	2	1
	Injury to Places of Worship	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Party Demonstrations	–	–	–	–	–	–
OTHER OFFENCES	Combination	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Prison Breaking, and Aiding Escape of Prisoners	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Injuring, or attempting to Injure a Railway Train	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Ribbonism	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Coining	–	–	–	–	–	–
	TOTALS	89	–	16	32	67	40

MINOR OFFENCES NOT

Summary Convictions	
Cases sent to Trial	
Cases Dismissed	
Cases in which no Proceedings have been taken before Magistrates	
TOTALS	

Mullingar, 27 February 1871.

RETURN of all Offences Committed in the County of *Westmeath*, since Summer Assizes, 1870, &c.—*continued.*

SUMMARY.

Number of Persons Arrested within the Period of this Return.			Number of Accused or Suspected Persons.				Number of Persons Arrested by the Constabulary, within the Period of this Return, for Offences Committed in England, Wales, and Scotland.	Number of Cases in which Trial was Postponed at Quarter or Petty Sessions.	Number of Cases for Trial at this Assizes.	Number of Persons for Trial at this Assizes.	
For Offences within this Period.		For Offences of a Former Period.	Convicted at Quarter Sessions.	Convicted Summarily.	Discharged for want of sufficient Evidence.	Acquitted.				For Offences Committed within the Period of this Return.	For Offences of a Former Period.
Without Sworn Information.	Upon Sworn Information.										
6	–	–	–	–	6	–	–	–	–	–	–
4	–	–	–	–	1	–	–	–	3	3	–
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5	1	–	–	1	2	1	–	–	2	2	–
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–	1	–	–	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	–
1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	1	–
1	2	–	–	–	–	1	–	–	2	2	–
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5	5	–	–	2	4	–	–	–	4	4	–
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4	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	4	–
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27	9	–	1	3	14	2	–	–	13	16	–

SPECIALLY REPORTED.

Common Assaults.	Larcenies.	Intoxication.
158	15	582
4	4	—
46	2	34
28	2	—
236	23	616

F. J. Heath, First County Inspector, R. I. C.

COUNTY OF WESTMEATH.

RETURN of all OFFENCES committed in the above County since the last Spring Assizes, so far as the same have been reported to the Constabulary.

No.	NATURE OF OFFENCE.	NAME OF INJURED PERSON.	Date of Offence.	Place where Committed, i.e.—Town or Townland. *Note.*—T. denotes "Town."	WHETHER RENDERED AMENABLE TO JUSTICE, AND THE RESULT IN EACH CASE.				
					If Informations have been Lodged, when? If not, why not?	Names of Persons Accused or Suspected.	Number of Attempts to Detect or Arrest the Offenders in each case.	Names of Persons Arrested or made amenable.	OBSERVATIONS AND RESULTS.
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
1	Firing at the Person	John Fox	27 Feb. 1870	Ballymacmorris -	Information - 27 Feb. 1870	William Hughes and Francis Grogan.	4	William Hughes and Francis Grogan.	Discharged, not being identified. For having joined in taking a farm.
2	Ditto	Alice McElroy	2 Mar. „	Rahanie -	Information - 2 Mar. „	Daniel Reavy and John Garland.	2	Daniel Reavy and John Garland.	Discharged, not being identified. No motive can be assigned.
3	Ditto	Rev. James Crofton, clerk	22 Mar. „	Clonfad -	Information - 23 Mar. „	Thomas Coleman and James Walsh.	3	Thomas Coleman and James Walsh.	Discharged, want of evidence. For having noticed tenants to raise rent.
4	Ditto	E. F. Hickson, S. I.	9 May „	Gilliardstown -	Information - 11 May „	- Nil	2	Patrick Finnegan	Discharged, want of sufficient evidence. Motive: for efficient discharge of duty as a constabulary officer.
1	Setting Fire to Fox Cover.	Sir Percy Nugent	4 April „	Tober, Mount Farnham.	No information; Declined -	- Nil	2	- Nil	
2	Arson and Incendiary Fire.	Stephen Woods	6 Mar. „	Culvin -	Information - 6 Mar. 1870	- Nil	Several -	- Nil	No motive can be assigned.
3	Arson; Incendiary Fire.	Patrick Mullins	28 April „	Clondalevor -	None - Declined -	- Nil	3	- Nil	For having paid his rent.
4	Ditto	Mary Kilduff	30 April „	Stonehall -	Information - 2 May 1870	- Nil	Several -	- Nil	For having discharged a caretaker.
5	Maliciously Burning Fox Cover.	Westmeath Hunt Club	22 April „	Laugh Park -	None - Declined -	- Nil	1	- Nil	No motive can be assigned.
6	Arson and Incendiary Fire.	Margaret Palmer	10 June „	Kilbeggan Town -	Information - 11 June 1870	- Nil	2	- Nil	ditto - - ditto.
									ditto - - ditto.
1	Robbery from Dwelling.	William Thomas Dillon	21 June „	Togerstown -	Information - 21 June „	- Nil	2	- Nil	Servant maid and sweetheart suspected.
1	Sheep Stealing	Peter Brine	16 Mar „	Clonikilvant -	Information - 7 May „	- Nil	2	Thomas Baker	Acquitted at Quarter Sessions.
2	Ditto	Bernard Casey	4 June „	Killeenahinch -	None - Declined -	- Nil	Several -	- Nil	No motive assigned for this.

1	Intimidation by a Man Armed.	Peter M'Namara	27 Mar. 1870	Ballygarvey	Information - 28 Mar. 1870	Nil	Several	Nil	To deter from paying rent.
2	Threatening Letter	Patrick Byrnes	16 Mar. „	Parcelstown	None - Declined	Nil	2	Nil	For interfering about farm of land.
3	Ditto	E. Goodall	8 April „	Redmonstown	None - Declined	Nil	1	Nil	To deter to discharge a servant.
4	Ditto	George Murray	19 April „	Rathmore	None - Declined	Nil	3	Nil	To deter from dispossessing a man.
5	Ditto	James Reilly	5 May „	Empor	None - Declined	Nil	2	Nil	To deter from interfering about land.
6	Ditto	Thomas Parker	19 May „	Rathowen	None - Declined	Nil	1	Nil	To deter from taking a garden.
7	Ditto	C. Stanley	7 Mar. „	Coole	None - Declined	Nil	1	Nil	Agrarian.
8	Ditto	The Public	20 Mar. „	Finned	None - Declined	Nil	1	Nil	ditto.
9	Ditto	Alexander Walker	3 April „	Togher	None - Declined	Nil	1	Nil	ditto.
10	Ditto	Mat. Sheridan	24 April „	Coole	Information - 25 April 1870	Nil	1	Nil	ditto.
11	Ditto	James Smith	28 April „	Clongeragh	None - Declined	Nil	1	Nil	ditto.
12	Ditto	Henry Walker	28 May „	Corracreeragh	None - Declined	Patrick Gibney	1	Nil	Arising out of a family dispute.
13	Ditto	Henry Walker	17 June „	Corracreeragh	None - Declined	Patrick Gibney	2	Nil	ditto - - ditto.
14	Intimidation by Armed Party.	Edward Hope	24 April „	Clondeelever	Information - 29 April 1870	Nil	3	Nil	Agrarian; to deter to give up land.
15	Ditto	Christopher Colgan Owen Cleary	6 Mar. „ 6 Mar. „	Clonlost Balrath	Information - 8 Mar. „ Information - 9 Mar. „	Nil Nil	Frequent Frequent	Nil Nil	Agrarian. ditto.
16	Intimidation	Michael Simons, Michael Cregan, and John Vaughan.	16 Mar. „	Lisclouger	Information - 18 Mar. „	Nil	Frequent	Nil	To deter from working, unless at increased rate of wages.
17	Intimidation, Armed Party.	C. Cunningham	25 Mar. „	Riverdale	Information - 26 Mar. „	James and Patrick Clancy and Francis Burke.	3	James and Patrick Clancy and Francis Burke.	Discharged, not being identified.
18	Threatening Letters	Andrew Dunne, Matthew Gaffney.	31 Mar. „	Hyde Park	Information - 7 April „	Nil	Several	Nil	To deter to give up grazing land, which was refused to be let to others.
19	Intimidation, Firing a Shot.	Thomas Neill	2 Mar. „	Killinure	None - Declined	Nil	Several	Nil.	
20	Intimidation by Armed Party.	Thomas Parker	6 Mar. „	Rath	None - Declined	Nil	Several	Nil	Agrarian; to deter to give up land.
21	Threatening Letter	Daniel Brian	7 Mar. „	Bunnahinly	None - Declined	Several (8) persons	Several	Nil	To deter, for having taken land.
22	Ditto	William M'Leon	12 Mar. „	Lissywoollen	None - Declined	Pat. Walsh and M. Fallon.	Several	Nil	To deter him to discharge a servant.

RETURN of all Offences committed in the County of Westmeath, since the last Spring Assizes, so far as the same may have been Reported to the Constabulary—*continued.*

No.	NATURE OF OFFENCE.	NAME OF INJURED PERSON.	Date of Offence.	Place where Committed, *i.e.*—Town or Townland. *Note.*—T. denotes "Town."	WHETHER RENDERED AMENABLE TO JUSTICE, AND THE RESULT IN EACH CASE.				
					If Informations have been Lodged, when? If not, why not?	Names of Persons Accused or Suspected.	Number of Attempts to Detect or Arrest the Offenders in each Case.	Names of Persons Arrested or made amenable.	OBSERVATIONS AND RESULTS.
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
23	Threatening Letter	Winifred Kilduff	23 Mar. 1870	Blyry, Lower	No information; Declined	Nil	Frequent	Nil	To deter her to discharge a servant.
24	Ditto	Margaret Martin	4 April „	Lissywoollen	None - Declined	Nil	Frequent	Nil	Intimidation to discharge servant.
25	Ditto	Martin Carrall	12 April „	Bunavally	None - Declined	William West	Frequent	Nil	No motive assigned.
26	Ditto	Joseph Vaughan	11 June „	Cartrontray	None - Declined	Nil	Frequent	Nil	Agrarian, as to letting land.
27	Ditto	Edward Malone	20 June „	Warren High	None - Declined	Nil	Frequent	Nil	To deter to pay for damage, gravel pit.
28	Intimidation, armed party.	Peter Murray	5 Mar. „	Cloneyhaigue	None - Declined	Nil	2	Nil	Family dispute about land.
29	Intimidation by armed men.	Walter Furlong	6 April „	Kilbeggan	None - Declined	Nil	2	Nil	To deter to leave his situation.
30	Intimidation, armed party.	Michael Brennan	23 April „	Cloneyhaigue	Information - 27 April 1870	Peter Calinan	3	Peter Calinan	Discharged, not identified; agrarian in connection family affairs.
31	Ditto	Joseph Malloy and Peter Murray.	5 June „	Cloneyhaigue, Clonfad.	Information - 6 June „	David Grennan and James Flanagan.	3	David Grennan and James Flanagan.	Discharged, not identified; motive, to deter them to remove cattle off a long disputed farm.
32	Threatening Notices	Farmer Roan	6 Mar. „	Kilbeggan	None - Declined	Nil	1	Nil	Agrarian; to deter taking land advertised to be sold for seven years.
33	Threatening Letter	Owen Colgan	12 April „	Ballyhast	None - Declined	Nil	1	Nil	Relative to farm out of lease; to deter him from seeking removal.
34	Ditto	Peter Murray	24 April „	Cloneyhaigue	None - Declined	Nil	1	Nil	Dispute between brothers about farm.
35	Threatening Notices	Small Farmers	24 April „	Ballykilmore	None - Declined	Nil	1	Nil	To deter from taking grazing land on Cloneyhaigue Farm.

36	Threatening Letter	Joseph Molloy	24 May „	Clonlad	None	Declined	Nil	1	Nil	To deter him to take a heifer off grass on Cloncyhaigue Farm. *See* No. 31.
37	Intimidation	To Farmers, 3	14 Mar. „	Kilcurnreragh	None	Declined	Nil	Several	Nil	To prevent payment of rent.
38	Ditto	Public generally	17 Mar. „	Ballybuckoge	None	Declined	Nil	Several	Nil	ditto.
39	Ditto	John Doran	20 Mar. „	Callierstown	None	Declined	Nil	Several	Nil	Motive, to deprive him of a farm in possession for last 30 years.
40	Ditto	John Martin	23 April „	Cartron	No information;	Declined	John Martin and Pat. Horan.	Several	Nil	To prevent payment of rent.
41	Threatening Letter	Edward Calo	13 Mar. „	Callierstown	None	Declined	Nil	Several	Nil	For taking proceeding to recover money.
42	Ditto	Robert Seal and Rev. Thomas Watson.	18 June „	Ballymore and Mulloughcloe.	None	Declined	Nil	Several	Nil	As executors to a will having pressed tenants to pay rent.
43	Threatening Language	Laurence Conasel	18 April „	Killogeneghan	Information	22 April 1870	Nil	Several	Nil	Dispute about a house, &c.
44	Threatening Letter	John Bryan, Samuel Moore	3 Mar. „	Rochfort	Information	5 Mar. „	Nil	Several	Nil	No motive can be assigned.
45	Ditto	John Wickham	3 Mar. „	Mullingar T.	None	Declined	Nil	Several	Nil	To deter him, being a strange tailor.
46	Ditto	John Egan	7 May „	ditto	None	Declined	Nil	Several	Nil	To deter to give up grass land.
47	Ditto	Thomas Murtagh	29 May „	ditto	None	Declined	Nil	Several	Nil	For having given evidence at petty sessions against a man for way-lay and assault.
48	Ditto	Mrs. J. C. Lyons	1 June „	Ladistown	None	Declined	Nil	Several	Nil	To deter to discharge maid servant, arising out of squabble amongst servants.
1	House Attack	Patrick Creighton	27 Mar. „	Williamstown	Information	30 Mar. 1870	Nil	2	Nil.	
1	Plucking Sheep	Michael Flanagan	29 Mar. „	Hightown	None	Declined	Nil	Several	Nil	No motive except robbery.
1	Firing into Dwelling	William M'Lean	8 Mar. „	Lyssywoollen	None	Declined	Nil	Frequent	Nil	To deter to discharge a servant.
2	Ditto	John Kerigan	16 April „	Parcelstown	Information	16 April 1870	John Connelly	Frequent	John Connelly	Motive, dispute about land. Discharged for want of evidence.

Mullingar, 7 July 1870.

RETURN of all Offences committed in the above County since the last Spring Assizes, so far

SUMMARY.

NATURE OF OFFENCE.		Number of Offences.		Number of Cases in which Depositions were taken.		Number of Cases in which the Offenders were Unknown.	Number of Injured Persons who Declined to Lodge Informations at all.
		Since last Assizes.	Offences of a Previous Date for which Arrests were made within the Period of this Return.	In which Persons were Named or Charged.	In which Persons were not Named.		
OFFENCES AGAINST THE PERSON	Homicide	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Firing at the Person	4	–	–	4	4	–
	Conspiracy to Murder	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Administering Poison	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Rape, and Felonious Assault on Females	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Infanticide, and Concealing Birth	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Abduction	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Assault on Police, Bailiffs, &c.	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Serious Assaults	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Desertion of Children	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Unnatural Crime	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Bigamy	–	–	–	–	–	–
OFFENCES AGAINST PROPERTY	Arson and Incendiary Fire	6	–	–	3	6	3
	Burglary and Housebreaking	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Highway and other Robberies	1	–	–	1	1	–
	Taking and holding Forcible Possession	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Cattle and Sheep Stealing	2	–	1	–	–	1
	Killing, Cutting, or Maiming Cattle	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Sacrilege	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Levying Contributions	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Piracy	–	–	–	–	–	–
OFFENCES AFFECTING THE PUBLIC PEACE	Demand or Robbery of Arms	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Appearing Armed	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Faction Fights	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Riots and Affrays	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Administering Oaths Unlawfully	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Threatening Notices or Letters, and Intimidation.	48	1	–	41	48	37
	Pound Breach	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Turning up Land	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Attacking Houses	1	–	–	–	–	–
	Resistance to Legal Process	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Illegal Meetings or Processions	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Levelling	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Injury to Property, Plucking Sheep, &c.	1	–	–	1	1	1
	Firing into Dwellings	2	–	1	–	1	1
	Injury to Places of Worship	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Party Demonstrations	–	–	–	–	–	–
OTHER OFFENCES	Combination	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Prison Breaking, and aiding Escape of Prisoners.	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Injuring or attempting to injure a Railway Train.	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Ribbonism	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Coining	–	–	–	–	–	–
	TOTALS	65	1	2	20	62	43

MINOR OFFENCES NOT

Summary Convictions	
Cases sent to Trial	
Cases Dismissed	
Cases in which no Proceedings have been taken before Magistrates	
TOTALS	

Mullingar, 7 July 1870.

as the same have been Reported to the Constabulary—*continued.*

SUMMARY.

Number of Persons Arrested within the Period of this Return.			Number of Accused or Suspected Persons.				Number of Persons Arrested by the Constabulary within the Period of this Return, for Offences Committed in England, Wales, and Scotland.	Number of Cases in which Trial was Postponed at Quarter or Petty Sessions.	Number of Cases for Trial at this Assizes.	Number of Persons for Trial at this Assizes.	
For Offences within this Period.		For Offences of a Former Period.	Convicted at Quarter Sessions.	Convicted Summarily.	Discharged for want of sufficient Evidence.	Acquitted.				For Offences Committed within the Period of this Return.	For Offences of a Former Period.
Without Sworn Information.	Upon Sworn Information.										
7					7						
	1					1					
5		1			5						1
1					1						
13	1	1	–	–	13	1	–	–	–	–	1

SPECIALLY REPORTED.

Common Assaults.	Larcenies.	Intoxication.
110	11	187
2	5	—
28	5	35
13	1	—
153	22	222

John Harcourt, S.I., for County Inspector at Depôt.

COUNTY INSPECTOR'S REPORT laid before JUDGE of ASSIZE.

KING'S COUNTY.

RETURN of all OFFENCES committed in the above County since the last Assizes, so far as the same have been Reported to the Constabulary, dated 8th July 1870.

No.	NATURE OF OFFENCE.	NAME OF INJURED PERSON.	Date of Offence.	Place where Committed, *i.e.*—Town or Townland. *Note.*—T. denotes "Town."	WHETHER RENDERED AMENABLE TO JUSTICE, AND THE RESULT IN EACH CASE.				
					If Informations have been Lodged, when? If not, why not?	Names of Persons Accused or Suspected.	Number of Attempts to Detect or Arrest the Offenders in each Case.	Names of Persons Arrested or made amenable.	OBSERVATIONS AND RESULTS.
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
1	Rape and Felonious assault on females.	Honora Walsh - -	21 Mar. 1870	Fara - - - -	Informations lodged, 24th March 1870.	Joseph Walsh - -	One - -	Joseph Walsh - -	For trial at this assizes.
1	Serious assaults.	James Stephens and James Dane.	25 Mar. 1870	Gloster - -	Informations lodged, 26th March 1870.	Martin Sulivan, Owen Stephens, Pat. Sulivan, and Thomas Sulivan.	One - -	Martin Sulivan, Owen Stephens, Pat. Sulivan, and Thomas Sulivan.	Tried at Quarter Sessions, and sentenced: Martin Sulivan to 12 months' imprisonment, Owen Stephens to 9 months, Pat. Sulivan to 4 months, and Thomas Sulivan discharged on his own recognizance.
1	Arson and incendiary fire.	Joseph H. Chamberlain -	27 May 1870	Glendine - -	Information lodged, 28th May 1870.	- Nil - - -	Several, to detect.	- Nil - - -	An unoccupied house burned; supposed to prevent it being again occupied.
2	- Same - - -	Patrick J. O'Connor, Esq.	2 June 1870	Moorock - -	Information lodged, 3rd June 1870.	- Nil - - -	Several - -	- Nil - - -	About 2½ tons of hay burned; supposed to be in consequence of Mr. O'Connor having prosecuted some parties to conviction at last assizes.
1	Burglary and housebreaking.	Henry Burgess - -	21 Mar. 1870	Tullamore, T. -	Informations lodged, 25th March 1870.	Thomas Hannon and Daniel Quinn.	Several, to detect.	- Nil - - - Searched the suspected houses under a warrant.	A shop entered during the night through a window, and a piece of corduroy taken, and about 6 *s.* in copper money.
2	Burglary and housebreaking.	William Murphy - -	18 June 1870	Tullamore, T. -	No information; unnecessary -	- None - - -	Several, to detect.	- Nil - - -	A shop entered during the night, through the door not being secured, and a roll of tobacco, value 4 *l.*, and about 7 *s.* in silver and copper, also a quart of spirits.

1	Highway and other robberies.	Michael Monteith - -	15 Mar. 1870	Frankford, T. -	Informations lodged, 21st March 1870.	Thomas Guinan -	Three - -	Thomas Guinan -	A barn broken into at night, and about two barrels of barley stolen. The case was dismissed for want of sufficient evidence.
2	- Same - -	Christopher Bannon -	29 June 1870	Clara, T. - -	Informations lodged, 29th June 1870.	Darby O'Kean, and Mary O'Kean (alias) Leonard.	One - -	Darby O'Kean and Mary O'Kean, (alias) Leonard.	For trial at the assizes.
1	Cattle and sheep stealing.	James Molloy - -	5 June 1870	Murrough - -	Informations lodged, 7th June 1870.	Joseph Molloy and John Dunne.	One - -	Joseph Molloy and John Dunne.	The bills were ignored at Quarter Sessions, it being the owner's son who stole the cattle.
1	Threatening notices or letters, and intimidation.	Joshua Manly, Esq., J.P., and M. B. Ball, Esq.	7 Mar. 1870	Monasteroris -	Declined to lodge informations.	- Nil - - -	Several, to detect the writer.	- Nil - - -	A letter was received by Mr. Manly, threatening him and his friend Mr. Ball, that a visit would be paid to them, if the labourers of the former did not get an increase of wages.
2	- Same - - -	Thomas H. Mullock, Esq.	8 Mar. 1870	Bellair - -	Declined to lodge informations.	- Nil - - -	Several -	- Nil - - -	A letter received by Mr. Mullock, threatening him if he did not give up a farm of land, which he purchased from a man 20 years since.
3	- Same - - -	Terence Coyne and Foler R. Garvey, Esq.	9 Mar. 1870	Bellair, Grogan -	Not considered necessary -	- Nil - - -	Several, to detect the writer.	- Nil - - -	A letter and notice telling Coyne, who is bailiff to Mr. Garvey, not to collect any more bog-rent, which was only lately asked off the tenants on the property in question.
4	- Same - - -	George Dixon and James Lowe.	9 Mar. 1870	Newtown - -	No informations; unnecessary	- Nil - - -	Several -	- Nil - - -	A letter received by Dixon and Lowe, threatening each with death, if they did not give up a farm of land jointly occupied and in their possession 20 years.
5	- Same - - -	Thomas Kelly, Esq. -	20 Mar. 1870	Gaugeborough -	No informations; not necessary.	- Nil - - -	Several -	- Nil - - -	A letter was received by Mr. Kelly threatening to do him bodily harm if he did not give up a field of his to a widow Laffy.

RETURN of all Offences committed in King's County since the last Assizes, so far as the same have been Reported to the Constabulary, dated 8 July 1870—*continued.*

No.	NATURE OF OFFENCE.	NAME OF INJURED PERSON.	Date of Offence.	Place where Committed, *i. e.*—Town or Townland. *Note.*—T. denotes "Town."	WHETHER RENDERED AMENABLE TO JUSTICE, AND THE RESULT IN EACH CASE.				
					If Informations have been Lodged, when? If not, why not?	Names of Persons Accused or Suspected.	Number of Attempts to Detect or Arrest the Offenders in each Case.	Names of Persons Arrested or made Amenable.	OBSERVATIONS AND RESULTS.
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
6	Threatening notices, or letters and intimidation.	E. W. Costello, Esq.	23 Mar. 1870	Faheeran	No informations; not necessary.	Nil	Several	Nil	A letter received by Mr. Costello, threatening to shoot him if he did not deal fairly with his tenantry in County Westmeath.
7	Same	Andrew Connolly, Esq., J. P.	1 April 1870	Cloonagh	No informations; not considered necessary.	Nil	Several	Nil	A letter was received by Mr. Connolly, threatening him with death if he did not dispossess a tenant of his in Queen's County.
8	Same	Patrick Clavin	14 April 1870	Brackagh	No informations; not necessary.	Nil	Several	Nil	A letter received by Clavin threatening him with death, if he did not give 10 *l.* to the widow Henry for a field in his possession 13 years.
9	Same	Thomas Minnock	16 April 1870	Ballybough	No informations; not necessary.	Nil	Several	Nil	A letter received by Minnock, threatening him with bodily injury if he did not give up a farm of land he has 20 years.
10	Same	Anthony Daly	25 April 1870	Kilmucklin	No informations; not necessary.	Nil	Several	Nil	A letter was received by Daly, saying he would be shot if he prosecuted his niece and a man named Daly, both of whom absconded, taking 250 *l.* of his money, but were brought back
11	Same	William Fale	10 May 1870	Tullamore, T.	No information; not necessary.	Nil	Several	Nil	A letter received by Fale, threatening him with death, if he did not deal quietly towards parties employed repairing the public roads.

12	Same	Joseph Mooney	21 Mar. 1870	Raheenduff	Information lodged, 28th May 1870.	William Hyland, Bryan M'Elduff.	One	William Hyland and Bryan M'Elduff.	For trial at this assizes.
1	Attacking Houses	Pat. Clavin	14 Mar. 1870	Brackagh	No information; not necessary.	Nil	Several	Nil	Seven men, three of whom were armed with pistols, went to Clavin's house, and ordered him to give 9 *l.* or 10 *l.* to Mary Henry as compensation for land taken from Henry some years since. One of the men fired a shot through the ceiling when leaving.
2	Same	Patrick Lyons, Patrick Daly.	10 April 1870	Russagh	No information; not necessary.	Nil	Several	Nil	Five men, armed with sticks, met Lyons on the road, and threatened to beat him, if his master, Mr. Johnston, did not discharge Pat. Daly from his employment.
3	Same	Cornelius Fox	13 May 1870	Tara	No informations; not necessary.	Nil	Several	Nil	Four men, armed with pistols, went to Fox's house at night, and fired a shot into the door, and ordered him to give up in three days a farm of land he has 20 years.
4	Same	Peter Murray	3 July 1870	Tully	Informations lodged, 4th July 1870.	Timothy Daly	One	Timothy Daly	Two men, armed with sticks, entered Murray's house, and assaulted him; the assigned motive is that he prosecuted Daly for trespass of geese.
5	Same	James Larkin	15 May 1870	Cornalawn	Informations lodged, 16 May 1870.	Pat. Horan	One	Pat. Horan	For trial at this assizes.

RETURN of all Offences committed in King's County since the last Assizes, so far

SUMMARY.

NATURE OF OFFENCE.		Number of Offences.		Number of Cases in which Depositions were taken.		Number of Cases in which the Offenders were Unknown.	Number of Injured Persons who declined to Lodge Informations at all.
		Since last Assizes.	Offences of a previous Date for which Arrests were made within the Period of this Return.	In which Persons were Named or Charged.	In which Persons were not Named.		
OFFENCES AGAINST THE PERSON	Homicide	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Firing at the Person	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Conspiracy to Murder	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Administering Poison	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Rape, and Felonious Assault on Females	1	–	1	–	–	–
	Infanticide, and Concealing Birth	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Abduction	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Assault on Police, Bailiffs, &c.	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Serious Assaults	1	–	1	–	–	–
	Desertion of Children	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Unnatural Crime	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Bigamy	–	–	–	–	–	–
OFFENCES AGAINST PROPERTY	Arson and Incendiary Fire	2	–	–	2	2	–
	Burglary and Housebreaking	2	–	1	–	2	1
	Highway and other Robberies	2	–	2	–	–	–
	Taking and holding Forcible Possession	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Cattle and Sheep Stealing	1	–	–	1	–	–
	Killing, Cutting, or Maiming Cattle	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Sacrilege	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Levying Contributions	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Piracy	–	–	–	–	–	–
OFFENCES AFFECTING THE PUBLIC PEACE	Demand or Robbery of Arms	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Appearing Armed	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Faction Fights	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Riots and Affrays	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Administering Oaths Unlawfully	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Threatening Notices or Letters, and Intimidation.	12	–	1	–	11	14
	Pound Breach	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Turning up Land	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Attacking Houses	5	–	1	1	4	4
	Resistance to Legal Process	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Illegal Meetings or Processions	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Levelling	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Injury to Property, Plucking Sheep, &c.	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Firing into Dwellings	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Injury to Places of Worship	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Party Demonstrations	–	–	–	–	–	–
OTHER OFFENCES	Combination	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Prison Breaking, and aiding Escape of Prisoners.	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Injuring or attempting to injure a Railway Train.	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Ribbonism	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Coining	–	–	–	–	–	–
	TOTALS	26	–	7	4	19	19

MINOR OFFENCES NOT

Summary Convictions	
Cases sent to Trial	
Cases Dismissed	
Cases in which no Proceedings have been taken before Magistrates	
TOTALS	

Tullamore, 8 July 1870.

as the same have been Reported to the Constabulary, dated 8 July 1870—*continued.*

SUMMARY.

Number of Persons Arrested within the Period of this Return.			Number of Accused or Suspected Persons.				Number of Persons Arrested by the Constabulary, within the Period of this Return, for Offences Committed in England, Wales, and Scotland.	Number of Cases in which Trial was Postponed at Quarter or Petty Sessions.	Number of Cases for Trial at this Assizes.	Number of Persons for Trial at this Assizes.	
For Offences within this Period.		For Offences of a former Period.	Convicted at Quarter Sessions.	Convicted Summarily.	Discharged for want of sufficient Evidence.	Acquitted.				For Offences Committed within the Period of this Return.	For Offences of a former Period.
Without Sworn Information.	Upon Sworn Information.										
–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
–	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	1	–
–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
–	4	–	4	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
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4	10	–	4	–	4	–	–	–	4	6	–

SPECIALLY REPORTED.

Common Assaults.	Larcenies.	Intoxication.
49	6	267
5	4	—
26	14	39
4	4	—
84	28	306

B. M. Riley, for County Inspector at Depôt.

KING'S COUNTY.

RETURN of all OFFENCES committed in the above County since the last Assizes, so far as the same have been Reported to the Constabulary, dated 1 March 1871.

No.	NATURE OF OFFENCE.	NAME OF INJURED PERSON.	Date of Offence.	Place where Committed, *i.e.*—Town or Townland, *Note.*—T. denotes "Town."	WHETHER RENDERED AMENABLE TO JUSTICE, AND THE RESULT IN EACH CASE.				
					If Informations have been Lodged, when? If not, why not?	Names of Persons Accused or Suspected.	Number of Attempts to Detect or Arrest the Offenders in each Case.	Names of Persons Arrested or made Amenable.	OBSERVATIONS AND RESULTS.
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
1	Firing at the person	Cornelius Fox	30 Oct. 1870	Ashfield	Informations lodged, 30th October 1870.	David M'Keon Kieran Gaffy. John Flynn. James Gonnley. Thomas Campbell. Thomas Nolan. John Scully. Denis Scally. Thomas Scally. John Daly. Peter M'Donnell. Hugh Grennan. Joseph Foylan. Michael Conlan.	Several	David M'Keon Kieran Gaffy. John Flynn. James Gonnley. Thomas Campbell. Thomas Nolan. John Scally. Denis Scally. Thomas Scally. John Daly. Peter M'Donnell. Hugh Grennan. Joseph Foylan. Michael Conlan.	Fox was met on his way to chapel at half-past seven o'clock a.m. by two men armed with pistols, who ordered him to place himself on his knees; he refused, when a struggle ensued, and one of the party fired at him, inflicting a serious wound in his chest; several persons were digging potatoes close by, but rendered no assistance. About 20 years ago Fox took some land from which a party named Donohue was evicted.
2	Ditto	Michael Moran Eliza Moran.	15 Jan. 1871	Kilfoylan	Informations lodged, 16th January 1871.	Bernard Rabbit Patrick Rabbit. Timothy Rabbit. James M'Donnell. William Daly.	ditto	Bernard Rabbit Patrick Rabbit. Timothy Rabbit. James M'Donnell. William Daly.	Moran and his wife were proceeding to chapel, on a car, at about 11 o'clock a.m., when three men who were concealed behind a ditch fired at them, wounding Mrs. Moran dangerously in the head and face. The parties were seen by several persons who swore they could not identify them; neither could Moran or his wife. His father took land 20 years ago from a man named Kelly; to which, nephews of Kelly consider they have a claim.
1	Rape and felonious assault on females.	Mary Agnes O'Connor Rose O'Connor.	16 July 1870	Parsonstown, T.	Informations lodged, 16th July 1870.	Denis White	One	Denis White	The accused is stepfather to the injured parties, both of whom are under 14 years of age. For trial at this assizes.
1	Serious assaults	James Poland	2 Feb. 1871	Ballinacarrig	Informations lodged, 4th February 1871.	John Auldridge	Several	Nil	A dispute arose between the parties while attending a threshing machine, when Auldridge struck Poland on the head with a pitchfork, and absconded.

1	Arson and incendiary fires.	John Carty	29 Nov. 1870	Gloster	Informations lodged, 30 November 1870.	Stephen Carty	One	Stephen Carty	The police, when on patrol, found the out-offices and haggard on fire; one cow, seven pigs, and some hay and corn destroyed; supposed to be done by his father, who was arrested, and discharged in consequence of the injured man having declined to prosecute.
2	Ditto	William Carroll	31 Jan. 1871	Frankfort	Informations lodged, 1st February 1871.	John M'Loughlin	One	John M'Loughlin	A stack of barley was set on fire and partly consumed; supposed to have been committed by M'Loughlin, who has since been committed as a dangerous lunatic.
3	Ditto	James Dunphy	8 Feb. 1871	Ballinamona	Informations lodged, 13th February 1871.	Nil	Several	Nil	A stack of corn, out-offices, and a threshing machine burned; supposed value 100 *l.*; no motive assigned; a suspicious case; Dunphy a bankrupt.
1	Highway and other robberies.	Grand Canal Company	10 Feb. 1871	Shannon Harbour, T.	Informations lodged, 11th February 1871.	Patrick Cummins	One	Patrick Cummins	Arrested by the police when on patrol, with a bar of iron, the property of the Canal Company. For trial at this assizes.
1	Cattle and sheep stealing.	John Mooney	2 Nov. 1870	Kilgurtin	Informations lodged, 10th November 1870.	Nil	Several	Nil	A horse stolen off his land; considered it strayed, and did not report it for over a week.
1	Killing, cutting, and maiming cattle.	Joseph Daly	29 Sept. 1870	Arden	Informations lodged, 3rd October 1870.	Nil	ditto	Nil	A horse at grass received a stab in the neck, from which it died; was in the habit of trespassing, and likely got the injury when driving off from trespassing on another man's land.
1	Appearing armed	The Queen	9 Oct. 1870	Screggan	Informations lodged, 10th October 1870.	William Ledwidge	ditto	Nil	Carrying a gun without license; was summoned, but did not appear; absconded; warrant issued.
2	Ditto	Ditto	5 Nov. 1870	Leabeg	Informations lodged, 5th November 1870.	Daniel Brandon	One	Daniel Brandon	Arrested carrying a loaded gun without a license. For trial at this assizes.
1	Threatening notices or letters and intimidation.	Thomas French, Esq.	10 July 1870	Tullamore, T.	Not considered necessary	Nil	Several	Nil	Mr. French is county surveyor, and stopped payment at assizes to some road contractors; letter received threatening him with death if he did not act fair between man and man.
2	Ditto	Thomas Minnock	18 July 1870	Ballybot	ditto	Nil	ditto	Nil	Received a letter threatening him with death if he did not give up land which he has had in his possession for 20 years.
3	Ditto	Laurence Cantwell	15 Aug. 1870	Derrynanagh	Informations lodged, 16th August 1870.	Nil	ditto	Nil	A letter received threatening to shoot him if he did not give up some land which he took by the year.

RETURN of all Offences committed in King's County since the last Assizes, so far as the same have been Reported to the Constabulary, dated 1 March 1871—*continued*.

No.	NATURE OF OFFENCE.	NAME OF INJURED PERSON.	Date of Offence.	Place where Committed, *i.e.*—Town or Townland. *Note.*—T. denotes "Town."	WHETHER RENDERED AMENABLE TO JUSTICE, AND THE RESULT IN EACH CASE.				
					If Informations have been Lodged, when? If not, why not?	Names of Persons Accused or Suspected.	Number of Attempts to Detect or Arrest the Offenders in each Case.	Names of Persons Arrested or made Amenable.	OBSERVATIONS AND RESULTS.
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
4	Threatening notices or letters and intimidation.	Michael Ryan	16 Sept. 1870	Tullamore, T.	Not considered necessary	Nil	Several	Nil	A letter received threatening to shoot Ryan if he sent bread to Tyrrell's Pass.
5	Ditto	Robert Hunt, Esq.	19 Sept. 1870	Philipstown, T.	ditto	Nil	ditto	Nil	A letter received by Mr. Hunt (who is an agent) threatening to shoot him if he did not divide a bog on the estate himself and not leave it to his bailiff to do.
6	Ditto	Thomas Smyth	14 Oct. 1870	Clyduff	ditto	Nil	ditto	Nil	A letter received threatening bodily harm if he did not allow 1*l.* compensation to a herd.
7	Ditto	Thomas Elcoate	25 Oct. 1870	Ballinasragh	ditto	Nil	ditto	Nil	A letter received threatening to shoot him if he did not give up six acres of land which formerly belonged to parties named Cleary.
8	Ditto	George Roe, Esq.	15 Dec. 1870	Bolart	ditto	Nil	ditto	Nil	A letter received ordering him to give up a farm of land.
9	Ditto	John M'Gouran	18 Dec. 1870	Glasshouse	The injured person declined	Francis Patterson	ditto	Nil	A notice found posted near his house threatening him with bodily harm if he did not leave his employment before three days.
10	Ditto	Patrick Reilly	23 Dec. 1870	Lowertown	Informations lodged, 24th December 1870.	Nil	ditto	Nil	Two men visited him and ordered him to quit his employment, he being a herd to Mr. Coffey, of Westmeath.
11	Ditto	Patrick Robbins	2 Jan. 1871	Clara, T.	Not considered necessary	Nil	ditto	Nil	A letter received threatening bodily harm if he did not give up a farm of land which he held 20 years, or give compensation to a man named Molloy, who was evicted.
12	Ditto	Stephen Stackpool	15 Jan. 1871	Aughnagross	ditto	Ellen Minchin	ditto	Nil	A letter received threatening his life if he took James Gavin's land; the party suspected is mother-in-law to the injured man, and daughter to Gavin.

13	Ditto	Thomas Maher	17 Jan. 1871	Cooraclevin	No information. The injured person declined.	Ellen Minchin	ditto	Nil	A letter received threatening bodily harm if he took Gavin's land. *See* foregoing case.
14	Ditto	Archibald Roan	20 Jan. 1871	Clara, T.	Informations lodged, 20th January 1871.	Patrick Callaghan	One	Pat Callaghan	Two letters received threatening him with bodily harm if he did not give up his situation as bailiff. For trial at this assizes.
15	Ditto	Samuel Clarke	23 Jan. 1871	Kilnabin	Not considered necessary	Nil	Several	Nil	A letter received threatening him with bodily harm if he did not give up a bed to his sister.
16	Ditto	Malachy Clavan	23 Jan. 1871	Lehinch	Ditto	Nil	ditto	Nil	A letter received directing him to discharge a servant girl out of his employment, or mark the consequence.
17	Ditto	Terence Flanagan	28 Jan. 1871	Cloughataney	Ditto	Nil	ditto	Nil	A letter received recommending him to give up land which he held 20 years.
18	Ditto	Simon Lynch	2 Feb. 1871	Clara, T.	Ditto	Nil	ditto	Nil	A letter received threatening him with death if he ploughed Molloy's land for Robbins. *See* No. 11 of this Return.
19	Ditto	George Roe, Esq.	15 Feb. 1871	Bolart	Ditto	Nil	ditto	Nil	A letter received threatening bodily harm if he did not give up a farm of land which he has had 20 years.
20	Ditto	Rev. R. Tagart	21 Feb. 1871	Ballinaminton	Ditto	Nil	ditto	Nil	A letter received threatening him with death if he did not put away his herd.
21	Ditto	Edward Moore	16 Feb. 1871	Garr	Not yet lodged, but is prepared to do so if considered necessary.	Edward Smith	ditto	Nil	A letter received threatening to shoot him because he successfully opposed a claim at Road Sessions for compensation for a burning.
1	Attacking Houses	George Dunne Thomas Boland.	17 July 1870	Derrymore	Informations lodged, 20th July 1870.	James Shiels John Kearney. Robert Bradley.	ditto	James Shiels John Kearney. Robert Bradley.	Tried at Quarter Sessions and acquitted.
2	Ditto	Terence Flanagan	31 July 1870	Cloughataney	Not considered necessary.	Nil	ditto	Nil	Two men, armed with pistols, entered his house, and ordered him to give up a farm of land which he held 20 years.
3	Ditto	Patrick Johnstone	7 Jan. 1871	Kilcoursey	Ditto	Nil	ditto	Nil	Two men entered his house, and told him he should go on fairer with his son.
4	Ditto	Anne Howard	13 Sept. 1870	Cloughmoyle	Informations lodged, 13th September 1870.	William Burns	ditto	Nil	Two windows broken, and six bricks knocked off the chimney. Supposed in consequence of Mrs. Howard making remarks about Burns visiting another family.
1	Firing into Dwellings	Mathew Irwin Alexander Arthurs.	19 Feb. 1871	Ballybrumcullen	No informations; not yet considered necessary.	James Evans	ditto	Nil	A shot was fired through a pane of glass in a back window; supposed for the purpose of frightening Arthurs out of his employment.

RETURN of all Offences committed in King's County since the last Assizes, so far

SUMMARY.

NATURE OF OFFENCE.		Number of Offences.		Number of Cases in which Depositions were taken.		Number of Cases in which the Offenders were Unknown.	Number of Injured Persons who declined to Lodge Information at all.
		Since last Assizes.	Offences of a previous Date for which Arrests were made within the Period of this Return.	In which Persons were Named or Charged.	In which Persons were not Named.		
OFFENCES AGAINST THE PERSON	Homicide	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Firing at the Person	2	–	–	2	2	–
	Conspiracy to Murder	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Administering Poison	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Rape, and Felonious Assault on Females	1	–	1	–	–	–
	Infanticide, and Concealing Birth	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Abduction	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Assault on Police, Bailiffs, &c.	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Serious Assaults	1	–	1	–	–	–
	Desertion of Children	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Unnatural Crime	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Bigamy	–	–	–	–	–	–
OFFENCES AGAINST PROPERTY	Arson and Incendiary Fire	3	–	–	3	3	–
	Burglary and Housebreaking	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Highway and other Robberies	1	–	1	–	–	–
	Taking and holding Forcible Possession	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Cattle and Sheep Stealing	1	–	–	1	1	–
	Killing, Cutting, or Maiming Cattle	1	–	–	1	1	–
	Sacrilege	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Levying Contributions	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Piracy	–	–	–	–	–	–
OFFENCES AFFECTING THE PUBLIC PEACE	Demand or Robbery of Arms	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Appearing Armed	2	–	2	–	–	–
	Faction Fights	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Riots and Affrays	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Administering Oaths Unlawfully	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Threatening Notices or Letters, and Intimidation.	21	–	1	2	20	18
	Pound Breach	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Turning up Land	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Attacking Houses	4	–	1	1	3	2
	Resistance to Legal Process	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Illegal Meetings or Processions	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Levelling	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Injury to Property, Plucking Sheep, &c.	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Firing into Dwellings	1	–	–	–	1	2
	Injury to Places of Worship	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Party Demonstrations	–	–	–	–	–	–
OTHER OFFENCES	Combination	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Prison Breaking and aiding Escape of Prisoners.	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Injuring or attempting to injure a Railway Train.	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Ribbonism	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Coining	–	–	–	–	–	–
	TOTALS	38	–	7	10	31	22

MINOR OFFENCES NOT

Summary Convictions	
Cases sent to Trial	
Cases Dismissed	
Cases in which no Proceedings have been taken before Magistrates	
TOTALS	

Tullamore, 1 March 1871.

as the same have been Reported to the Constabulary, dated 1 March 1871—*continued.*

SUMMARY.

Number of Persons Arrested within the Period of this Return.			Number of Accused or Suspected Persons.				Number of Persons Arrested by the Constabulary, within the Period of this Return, for Offences Committed in England, Wales, and Scotland.	Number of Cases in which Trial was Postponed at Quarter or Petty Sessions.	Number of Cases for Trial at this Assizes.	Number of Persons for Trial at this Assizes.	
For Offences within this Period.		For Offences of a former Period.	Convicted at Quarter Sessions.	Convicted Summarily.	Discharged for want of sufficient Evidence.	Acquitted.				For Offences Committed within the Period of this Return.	For Offences of a Former Period.
Without Sworn Information.	Upon Sworn Information.										
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23	5	–	–	–	21	3	–	–	5	4	1

SPECIALLY REPORTED.

Common Assaults.	Larcenies.	Intoxication.
89	15	589
9	10	—
53	11	74
36	4	—
187	40	663

J. Molyen, First County Inspector.

Appendix, No. 7.

PAPER handed in by the Chairman.

AGRARIAN OUTRAGES, &c.

COUNTY OF MEATH.

PAGE

RETURN of Offences reported to the Judges of Assize.—Spring Assizes, 1870 - 212

RETURN of Offences reported to the Judges of Assize.—Summer Assizes, 1870 - 218

RETURN of Offences reported to the Judges of Assize.—Spring Assizes, 1871 - 222

AGRARIAN OUTRAGES, &c.

COUNTY OF MEATH.

RETURN of OFFENCES Reported to the JUDGES of ASSIZE.—Spring Assizes, 1870.

No.	NATURE OF OFFENCE.	NAME OF INJURED PERSON.	Date of Offence.	Place where Committed, *i.e.*—Town or Townland. *Note.*—T. denotes "Town."	WHETHER RENDERED AMENABLE TO JUSTICE, AND THE RESULT IN EACH CASE.				
					If Informations have been Lodged, when? If not, why not?	Names of Persons Accused or Suspected.	Number of Attempts to Detect or Arrest the Offenders in each case.	Names of Persons Arrested or made amenable.	OBSERVATIONS AND RESULTS.
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
1	Homicide - -	Thomas Reilly - -	18 Sept. 1869	Baskinagh - -	Informations 18th September 1869, and searching enquiry before magistrates.	Patrick Reilly, James Reilly, Thos. Reilly, and Thomas Quinn.	Promptly arrested.	Patrick Reilly, James Reilly, Thos. Reilly, and Thomas Quinn.	As Thomas Reilly, police pensioner, was returning from Trim Market, at about half-past nine p.m., when near his residence two men came from behind a ditch and beat him with a blunt instrument, fracturing his skull. Motive, private revenge. Accused discharged owing to the difficulty of procuring evidence. Exertions of police unceasing, but without effect.
2	Ditto - - -	Thomas Rothwell - -	4 Oct. 1869	Lackmelsh - -	Informations 4th October 1869, and strict enquiry before magistrates.	Charles Smith, Thomas Halpin, and Thomas Goveran.	Promptly arrested.	Charles Smith, Thomas Halpin, and Thomas Goveran.	Agrarian. About quarter-past five p.m., as Mr. Nicholson, D.L., was driving home in his carriage from the Railway Station at Kells, when about 1½ miles outside the town, shots were fired by two persons from behind the road wall, slightly wounding Mr. Nicholson and a lady who accompanied him, and killing the coachman, T. Rothwell. Accused discharged for want of evidence. Police exertions unceasing, but without effect.
3	Ditto - - -	Margaret M'Cormick -	7 Jan. 1870	Largey - -	Informations 7th January 1870, and strict enquiries before magistrates.	James Dunbar, Peter Leslie, and Peter M'Enroe.	Promptly arrested.	James Dunbar, Peter Leslie, and Peter M'Enroe.	The deceased, who was an old woman and living alone, was found murdered in her house about six a.m., and the roof thrown down after the deed was perpetrated. This woman was aunt to the Ledwick family, poisoned, as described in No. 1. Motive, private revenge. Accused discharged for want of evidence. Police exertions unceasing, but without effect.

	Firing at the person	James Gargan	24 Oct. 1869	Knockareny	Informations 25th October 1869, and case investigated before magistrates.	Owen Smith	Promptly arrested.	Owen Smith	As Mr. Gargan, who is steward to Mr. Farrell, J.P., was driving on his car from Kells, about seven p.m., accompanied by two other persons, a shot was fired, which fortunately passed over their heads. Accused discharged. Motive, revenge on the part of workmen. Exertions of police unsuccessful. Gargan was also fired at in June 1869.
	Administering Poison	James Ledwich, Andrew Ledwich, and Nicholas Ledwich.	9 Oct. 1869	Rathlagan	Informations 12th October 1869, and strict enquiry before magistrates.	-	-	-	A paper parcel, containing some flour, currants, &c., was found on the road by a sister of the Ledwich's, out of which a cake was made, and of which the family partook, resulting in the death of the father and two sons. Motive, revenge arising out of ill-feeling on the part of neighbours. To the same cause may be ascribed the murder of Margaret M'Cormick in No. 3. Exertions of police without effect.
1	Rape	Mary Murphy	3 Feb. 1870	Clondoogan	Informations 3rd February 1870.	John Lynch	Promptly arrested.	John Lynch	For trial at assizes.
1	Infanticide and Concealing Birth.	The Queen	1 Nov. 1869	Mullaghmore	Informations 1st November 1869.	Mary Dunbar and Catherine Dunbar.	Promptly arrested.	Mary Dunbar and Catherine Dunbar.	Concealing birth; for trial at assizes.
1	Assault, &c.	George Plunkett	2Nov. 1869	Nobber	Informations 9th November 1869.	Patrick Farrell	At once arrested.	Patrick Farrell	A dispute, in which the injured person received a stab in the thigh. Convicted at petty sessions.
2	Ditto	Edward Casey	23 Dec. 1869	Knockaranny	Informations 13th January 1870.	Patrick M'Mahon and Michael M'Mahon.	At once arrested.	Patrick M'Mahon and Michael M'Mahon.	Assault, arising out of a dispute; for trial at assizes.
1	Malicious burning	William Reynolds	24 July 1869	Ticroghan	Informations, 27th July 1869	-	-	-	A range of out-offices set on fire; motive, for using a mowing machine.
1	Burglary	James Battersby	21 Aug. 1869	Trim. T.	Informations, 22nd August 1869.	Julia Clarke	At once arrested	Julia Clarke	A dwelling-house entered, and bacon, &c. carried away; for trial at assizes.
1	Robbery	Andrew Tuite	14 Oct. 1869	Mobrick	Informations, 24th October 1869,	Nicholas Reilly and Francis Walsh.	Promptly arrested.	Nicholas Reilly and Francis Walsh.	Robbery of 86 *l.* on the public road; for trial at assizes.
1	Sheep stealing	E. O. Beirne	21 Jan. 1870	Archdeaconry	Informations, 21st January 1870.	James Gearty	Promptly arrested.	James Gearty	Sheep stolen off lands; convicted at petty sessions.

COUNTY OF MEATH.—RETURN of Offences Reported to the Judges of Assize.—Spring Assizes, 1870—*continued.*

No.	NATURE OF OFFENCE.	NAME OF INJURED PERSON.	Date of Offence.	Place where Committed, *i.e.*—Town or Townland. *Note.*—T. denotes "Town."	WHETHER RENDERED AMENABLE TO JUSTICE, AND THE RESULT IN EACH CASE.				
					If Informations have been Lodged, when? If not, why not?	Names of Persons Accused or Suspected.	Number of Attempts to Detect or Arrest the Offenders in each case.	Names of Persons Arrested or made amenable.	OBSERVATIONS AND RESULTS.
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
1	Robbery of arms -	William Kerr - -	28 Nov. 1869	Allanstown - -	Informations, 29th November 1869.	- - -	- -	- - -	Three men entered dwelling-house and carried away gun. Exertions of police without effect.
2	Ditto - - -	Patrick Wall - - -	4 Jan. 1870	Allanstown - -	None sworn - - - - -	- - -	- -	- - -	Five men, disguised, entered dwelling-house and carried away a gun. Exertions of police without effect.
3	Ditto - - -	Daniel Keane - -	4 Jan. 1870	Ardbracken - -	None sworn - - - - -	- - -	- -	- - -	A gun taken; supposed by party in above case.
4	Ditto - - -	William M'Comas - -	30 Jan. 1870	Vessington - -	Informations, 31st January 1870.	- - -	- -	- - -	Six or seven men entered dwelling-house, demanded a gun, which was given them, and carried away.
5	Ditto - - -	Laurence Daly Michael Daly. James Daly.	6 Feb. 1870	Rahoney - -	None sworn; enquiry before magistrates in petty sessions.	- - -	- -	- - -	A party of five or six men, armed, entered the houses of injured parties, and demanded and carried away a gun from each without any resistance on the part of the owners.
6	Ditto - - -	Patrick Gibney - - George Baker. Thomas Buchanan.	14 Feb. 1870	Betagstown - -	Informations, 16th February 1870.	- - -	- -	- - -	Two men entered the houses of the injured persons, demanded and carried away arms on same night.
7	Ditto - - -	Bryan M'Cabe - -	13 Feb. 1870	Churchtown - -	Informations, 13th February 1870.	Patrick Sullivan - Patrick Harte.	Promptly arrested.	Patrick Sullivan - Patrick Harte.	Ten or twelve men entered dwelling-house, demanded and carried away a gun. Accused discharged.
8	Ditto - - -	Patrick Herbert - -	13 Feb. 1870	Derlaugan - -	Informations, 14th February 1870.	- - -	- -	- - -	Three men entered dwelling-house, demanded and carried away a gun.
1	Intimidation - -	Margaret Halpin - - Thomas Halpin.	14 Nov. 1869	Lower Fennor -	Informations, 19th November 1869.	- - -	- -	- - -	A party of 20 men, disguised, entered house of injured persons, and made them swear to give up land; a family affair. Exertions of police unsuccessful.

2	Ditto	-	-	James Daly - -	-	20 Jan. 1870	Wardstown -	-	Informations, 20th January 1870.	-	-	-	Six or seven men, armed, entered Daly's house and threatened him should he take proceedings to evict cottier.
3	Ditto	-	-	Thomas Brady William Mulvany. Thomas Goveran.	-	27 Jan. 1870	Gibbstown -	-	Informations, 28th January 1870.	-	-	-	The injured persons were met on the road as they were coming from the fair of Athboy, and threatened should they take grass lands. Exertions of police without effect.
4	Ditto	-	-	Terence O'Brien Edward O'Brien.	-	9 Feb. 1870	Scurlogetown	-	Informations, 19th February 1870.	-	-	-	Three men came to a field in which the O'Briens were working, and threatened them should they not give up grass lands.
5	Ditto	-	-	Joseph Lewis - -	-	21 Feb. 1870	Kilmurray -	-	Informations, 21st February 1870.	Pat. Murray	Promptly arrested.	Pat. Murray	Two men came to the field in which Lewis was working, and ordered him to give up the land on which he was working to former tenant; on refusing, each of them presented pistols and swore him to give up the land at once. Accused discharged.
1	Threatening letter	-		James Sheridan -	-	12 Oct. 1869	Martenstown	-	Informations, 12th October 1869.	-	-	-	Letter received threatening, should rent on cottiers be raised.
2	Ditto	-	-	Luke Barrett - -	-	8 Nov. 1869	Tankardstown	-	None sworn - - -	-	-	-	Letter received ordering the dismissal of a man-servant, he being considered a spy and an informer.
3	Ditto	-	-	Michael Freeman Joseph Lowry. (Auctioneers.)	-	18 Nov. 1869	Kells, T. -	-	Informations, 18th November 1869.	-	-	-	Letters received by Messrs. Freeman & Lowry to deter from selling grass lands by auction.
4	Ditto	-	-	William Nelson Edward Nelson.	-	12 Nov. 1869	Kells, T. -	-	Informations, 12th November 1869.	-	-	-	Letters received to deter from taking grass lands.
5	Ditto	-	-	Michael Gaffney -	-	14 Nov. 1869	Dunshaughlin	-	Informations, 14th November 1869.	-	-	-	Letter received ordering to give up a small farm (taken on lease) to former tenant.
6	Ditto	-	-	James Duff - Peter Reynolds.	-	23 Nov. 1869	Shrunville -	-	Informations, 23rd November 1869.	-	-	-	Letters received to deter from taking grass lands.
7	Ditto	-	-	Thomas Farrell -	-	28 Nov. 1869	Carlanstown	-	None sworn - - -	-	-	-	Letter received to give up grass lands taken from Mr. Nicholson.
8	Ditto	-	-	Patrick Mathews -	-	27 Dec. 1869	Alaxdrian -	-	Informations, 28th December 1869.	-	-	-	Letter received to deter from raising rents on tenants.

COUNTY OF MEATH.—RETURN of Offences Reported to the Judges of Assize.—Spring Assizes, 1870—*continued.*

No.	NATURE OF OFFENCE.	NAME OF INJURED PERSON.	Date of Offence.	Place where Committed, *i.e.*—Town or Townland. *Note.*—T. denotes "Town."	WHETHER RENDERED AMENABLE TO JUSTICE, AND THE RESULT IN EACH CASE.				
					If Informations have been Lodged, when? If not, why not?	Names of Persons Accused or Suspected.	Number of Attempts to Detect or Arrest the Offenders in each case.	Names of Persons Arrested or made amenable.	OBSERVATIONS AND RESULTS.
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
9	Threatening letter	Laurence Carew	20 Dec. 1869	Kildaugan	Informations, 3rd June 1870				Letter received to deter from taking proceedings to evict a cottier.
10	Ditto	James Meehan	4 Jan. 1870	Blackcastle	Informations, 4th June 1870				Letter received to deter Meehan, who is a land steward, from setting grass land.
11	Ditto	Henry Atkinson, agent	10 Feb. 1870	Athboy	Informations, 10th February 1870.				Letter received to deter from evicting a tenant.
12	Ditto	N. H. Dyas, Esq.	14 Feb. 1870	Fosterfields	Informations, 14th February 1870.				Letter received, ordering the discharge of a herd in his employment.
13	Ditto	James Gray	24 Jan. 1870	Hayestown	None sworn				Letter received to compel him to surrender grass lands.
14	Ditto	William Reynolds	25 Jan. 1870	Moydrum	Informations, 25th January 1870.				Letter received to compel to discharge a workman.
15	Ditto	A. J. Walker	30 Jan. 1870	Ballair	Informations, 30th January 1870.				Letter received to deter from taking grass lands.
1	Turning up land	Edward Gannon	3 Feb. 1870	Rataine	Informations, 3rd February 1870.				A small portion of land turned up into ridges, and a notice posted, ordering that the land be set for potato ground.
2	Ditto	Hugh Corcoran	10 Feb. 1870	Grassgadden	Informations, 16th February 1870.				Some sods turned up in a field, and notice posted, ordering the land to be set for potato ground.

3	Ditto	Patrick M'Cann James Flood. Anthony Dunne,	30 Jan. 1870	Curleyland	Informations, 30th January 1870.				About four perches of land turned up into ridges as if intended for tillage purposes.
4	Ditto	T. L. Roberts, Esq., J.P.	27 Dec. 1869	Dormstown	Informations, 27th December 1869.				Some sods turned up in a field representing potato ridges, and a notice found posted, stating that the land was to be set at a fair rent for potato ground.
5	Ditto	James Dyas	20 Jan. 1870	Milltown	Informations, 21st January 1870.				A hole dug resembling a grave, and a notice posted, stating that the land was to be set at a fair rent for potato ground.
1	Injury to property	Thomas Byrne	21 July 1869	Hamlinstown	Informations, 23rd July 1870				Some persons unknown came on lands and broke a mowing machine, supposed for having been used in mowing corn.
1	Firing into dwellings	William Sheridan	14 Dec. 1869	Ringlestown	Informations, 15th December 1870.	John Boylan Christopher Smith. James Kinsella.	Promptly arrested.	John Boylan Christopher Smith. James Kinsella.	A shot fired in through parlour window of dwelling-house; motive, for refusing to give subscriptions towards support of families of Fenian prisoners; accused, discharged on their own recognizance.
1	Attempting to injure railway train.	Dublin and Drogheda Railway Company.	16 Sept. 1869	Knockumber	Informations, 24th September 1870.				A stone weighing about 1 cwt. was found on the rails; motive, wanton mischief, and not from a desire to upset train or injure passengers.
2	Ditto	Dublin and Meath Railway Company.	31 Oct. 1869	Mitchelstown	Informations, 1st November 1870.				A portion of rails torn up; supposed to prevent people attending a tenant-right meeting at Navan.
3	Ditto	ditto	11 Dec. 1869	Knocktown	Informations, 14th December 1870.				A shot fired (by a person unknown, who was seen standing on the fence) at the train when in motion, taking effect on a second class carriage, fortunately without doing any further injury.

Trim, 25 February 1870.

(signed) *J. R. Gibbons*, County Inspector.

COUNTY OF MEATH.

RETURN of OFFENCES reported to the JUDGES of ASSIZE.—Summer Assizes 1870.

No.	NATURE OF OFFENCE.	NAME OF INJURED PERSON.	Date of Offence.	Place where Committed, i.e.—Town or Townland. *Note.*—T. denotes "Town."	WHETHER RENDERED AMENABLE TO JUSTICE, AND THE RESULT IN EACH CASE.				
					If Informations have been Lodged, when? If not, why not?	Names of Persons Accused or Suspected.	Number of Attempts to Detect or Arrest the Offenders in each case.	Names of Persons Arrested or made amenable.	OBSERVATIONS AND RESULTS.
1.	3.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
1	Firing at the person	George Crawford	27 Mar. 1870	Stirrupstown	Informations, 28th March 1870, and strict enquiries before magistrates.				Shot fired through kitchen window, wounding Crawford; motive, agrarian. Exertions of police unceasing, but as yet without effect.
2	Ditto	J. Radcliffe, Esq., J.P.	23 April 1870	Townparks	Informations, 23rd April 1870	Edward Gearty and John Brady.	Promptly arrested.	Edward Gearty and John Brady.	As Mr. Radcliffe was returning from Kells, he was stopped by two men, one of whom held his horse, the other discharging a loaded pistol at him. Both for trial.
3	Ditto	Robert Shields	9 May 1870	Gibbonstown	Informations, 10th May 1870	Patrick Friery	Promptly arrested.	Patrick Friery	Shot fired through window; Shields narrowly escaped; supposed motive, revenge, for being prevented paying his addresses to Shield's sister.
1	Malicious burning	Peter Walsh	2 Mar. 1870	Robertstown	Informations, 6th March 1870				An out-house set on fire. Exertions of police unsuccessful.
2	Ditto	Henry French	13 Mar. 1870	Rathkenny	Informations, 14th March 1870				A dwelling-house set on fire. Exertions of police without effect.
3	Ditto	James Foran	19 Mar. 1870	Dalystown	Informations, 20th March 1870				A rick of hay set on fire. Compensation refused at Presentment Sessions.
4	Ditto	John M'Court	27 Mar. 1870	Bolies	Informations, 28th March 1870	Margaret Corrigan	Promptly arrested.	Margaret Corrigan	An out-house set on fire; motive, revenge by a servant. For trial.
5	Ditto	Richard Donnelly	27 Mar. 1870	Weston	Informations, 28th March 1870				A dwelling-house set on fire. Exertions of police without effect.

6	Ditto	Henry Weldon	16 April 1870	Hawkinstown	Informations, 19th April 1870	-	-	-	A range of out-offices set on fire. Exertions of police without effect.
7	Ditto	Patrick Plunkett	16 April 1870	Piercetown	Informations, 19th April 1870	-	-	-	An out-house set on fire. Exertions of police unsuccessful.
8	Ditto	Michael M'Garry	23 June 1870	Shanco	Informations, 24th June 1870	-	-	-	A small cabin set on fire. Exertions of police unsuccessful.
1	Burglary	John Johnston	19 Mar. 1870	Rossnaree	Informations, 20th March 1870	Thomas Healy, Joseph Scally, Francis Daly, and John Rooney.	Promptly arrested.	Thomas Healy, Joseph Scally, Francis Daly, and John Rooney.	Dwelling-house entered; goods, &c., carried away. Convicted at quarter sessions.
1	Robbery of arms	Bryan Daly	28 Feb. 1870	Kilmainham	Informations, 28th February 1870.	-	-	-	As Daly was going along the road, carrying his gun, it was taken from him by a man who came up. Police exertions fruitless.
2	Ditto	James Loughran	12 Mar. 1870	Shambo	Informations, 15th March 1870	John Reilly	Promptly arrested.	John Reilly	Loughran was visited by five men, who demanded his gun, which was given them. Accused discharged. Exertions of police without effect.
3	Ditto	James Beggan	8 Mar. 1870	Rahard	Informations, 12th March 1870	-	-	-	Beggan was visited by five men, who demanded his gun, which was handed them. Exertions of police without effect.
4	Ditto	Thomas Cappock	15 Mar. 1870	Knock	Informations, 16th April 1870	-	-	-	Cappock was visited by three men, who demanded his gun, which was handed them. Exertions of police without effect.
5	Ditto	Thomas Bradley	23 Mar. 1870	Knock	Informations, 23rd March 1870	-	-	-	Bradley was visited by three men, who demanded his gun, which was given them. Exertions of police without effect.
1	Intimidation	William Reilly	15 Mar. 1870	Kilberry	Informations, 16th March 1870	Patrick Duigenan and Laurence Fitzsimons.	Promptly arrested.	Patrick Duigenan and Laurence Fitzsimons.	Reilly was visited by seven men, who ordered him to give up some grass lands, and fired shots as they left. Accused discharged.
2	Ditto	John Halpin	15 Mar. 1870	Simonstown	Informations, 17th March 1870	-	-	-	Halpin was visited by six men (armed), who put him on his knees, and ordered him to give up some grass land. Exertions of police unsuccessful.

COUNTY OF MEATH.—RETURN of Offences reported to the Judges of Assize.—Summer Assizes 1870—*continued.*

No.	NATURE OF OFFENCE.	NAME OF INJURED PERSON.	Date of Offence.	Place where Committed, *i.e.*—Town or Townland. *Note.*—T. denotes "Town."	WHETHER RENDERED AMENABLE TO JUSTICE, AND THE RESULT IN EACH CASE.				
					If Informations have been Lodged, when? If not, why not?	Names of Persons Accused or Suspected.	Number of Attempts to Detect or Arrest the Offenders in each case.	Names of Persons Arrested or made amenable.	OBSERVATIONS AND RESULTS.
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10
3	Intimidation	Patrick Gavin	17 Mar. 1870	Kells, T.	Informations, 19th March 1870				As Gavan was proceeding to the fair of Navan, accompanied by two others; he was stopped and threatened, should he take grass lands.
4	Ditto	Adam Cochrane	18 Mar. 1870	Pottlerea	Informations, 19th March 1870				When returning from Kells, he was met by two men, who ordered him to break up his land for potato ground.
5	Ditto	Henry Farrelly	21 Mar. 1870	Ballynagun	Informations, 22nd March 1870				Twenty-five men visited Farrelly, and ordered him to give up certain grass lands. Exertions of police without effect.
6	Ditto	Patrick Lynch	3 April 1870	Rockfield	Informations, 3rd April 1870				A man came to Lynch and ordered him to quit his employment as herd on the land on which then employed.
7	Ditto	Laurence M'Glew	10 April 1870	Scollanstown	Informations, 10th April 1870				M'Glew was visited hy three men, who ordered him on his knees, which he refused. Exertions of police without effect.
8	Ditto	Owen Gavin	18 April 1870	Hardlestown	Informations, 18th April 1870				A party of three men stopped a car conveying cattle dealers to Navan Fair. Exertions of police without effect.
9	Ditto	Thomas Fagan	22 May 1870	Churchtown	Informations, 22nd May 1870				A party of five men came to Fagan's house and swore him to give up grass lands. Exertions of police unceasing.

1	Serious assault	Michael Dolan	26 May 1870	Ballintleive	Informations, 26th May 1870	James Caffrey	Promptly arrested.	James Caffrey	Dolan was attacked by four men, who beat him with sticks, and one of whom cut off a portion of his ear; motive, his being obnoxious to the neighbours; accused discharged. Case still undergoing investigation.
2	Serious assault	William Hackett	6 June 1870	Park	Informations, 6th June 1870	John Hughes Michael Connor. James Ennis.	Promptly arrested.	John Hughes Michael Connor. James Ennis.	As Hackett was returning on a car from Mullingar Races he was assaulted by three men, who were subsequently convicted at Petty Sessions.
1	Threatening letter	Andrew Grey	5 Mar. 1870	Hayestown	None sworn				Letter received, to compel to surrender grass land.
2	Ditto	Peter Ledwidge	6 Mar. 1870	Athboy	ditto				Letter received, to deter from taking grass lands.
3	Ditto	Garrett Hill	7 Mar. 1870	Rathmolyon	ditto				Letter received, to compel to surrender grass land.
4	Ditto	James Golden	10 Mar. 1870	Castletown	ditto				Letter received, to deter for having Con-acre.
5	Ditto	William Bond, J.P.	10 Mar. 1870	Ballinbigh	ditto				Sheridan, steward to Mr. Bond, was visited by five men, who left a letter purporting to set grazing land at a certain price.
6	Ditto	Patrick M'Cann	10 Mar. 1870	Townparks	ditto				Letter received, to compel to break up grazing land.
7	Ditto	James Stephenson	17 Mar. 1870	Rahinstown	ditto				Letter received by Stephenson, who is land steward to Mr. Fowler, J.P.; motive, for having discharged a workman.
8	Ditto	Mathew Gilshenan	19 April 1870	Ardglasson	ditto				Letter received, to compel to discharge his herd.
9	Ditto	A. H. Dyas, Esq.	10 May 1870	Athboy	ditto				Letter received, to compel to discharge his herd.

Trim, 5 July 1870.

(signed) *J. R. Gibbons*, County Inspector.

COUNTY OF MEATH.

RETURN of OFFENCES reported to the JUDGES of ASSIZE.—Spring Assizes, 1871.

No.	NATURE OF OFFENCE.	NAME OF INJURED PERSON.	Date of Offence.	Place where Committed, *i.e.*—Town or Townland. *Note.*—T. denotes "Town."	WHETHER RENDERED AMENABLE TO JUSTICE, AND THE RESULT IN EACH CASE.				
					If Informations have been Lodged, when? If not, why not?	Names of Persons Accused or Suspected.	Number of Attempts to Detect or Arrest the Offenders in each Case.	Names of Persons Arrested or made amenable.	OBSERVATIONS AND RESULTS.
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
1	Firing at the person—(supposed to intimidate.)	John Riggs, land steward	22 Jan. 1871	Galmoystown -	Informations, 23rd January 1871.	- - -	- -	- - -	As Mr. Riggs, who is land steward to Mr. Battersby, J. P., Lakefield, was returning from Castlepollard, about 7 p.m., on 22nd January, two shots were fired by three men on roadside, without injuring him; motive, supposed to deter him from discharging his duty. The police have been unceasing in their endeavours to discover the perpetrators, as yet without success.
1	Assault - - -	Hugh Lynch, labourer -	21 Sept. 1870	Tierworker - -	Informations, 21st September	James Gargan -	Promptly arrested.	James Gargan -	Dispute as to right of passage to a hog; a scuffle ensued, in which Lynch was seriously wounded in the arm; convicted at Quarter Sessions.
2	Ditto - - -	Bryan Callaghan, land bailiff.	10 Oct. 1870	Tullaghaustown -	Informations, 13th October -	Patrick Daly - -	Promptly arrested.	Patrick Daly - -	As Callaghan, who is land bailiff to the Earl of Fingall, was returning from Navan Fair, he was assaulted by three men who met him on the road; although he was accompanied by four friends, neither of them rendered him any assistance; motive, for prosecuting a tenant for cutting turf. Accused discharged for want of identification; further exertions of police without effect.
1	Malicious burning -	J. A. Farrell, J. P. -	6 Aug. 1870	Rathmino - -	Informations, 7th August -	Patrick Morris -	Promptly arrested.	Patrick Morris -	An unoccupied thatched house set on fire; accused discharged on bail; motive, dislike on the part of the workmen to a steward in Mr. Farrell's employment. Endeavours of police without effect.

2	Malicious burning -	Robert Shields, farmer -	3 July 1870	Gibbonstown -	Informations, 4th July - -	Patrick Friery, Patrick Reilly.	Promptly arrested.	Patrick Friery, Patrick Reilly.	A cock of hay, value about 1 *l.* 4 *s.*, set on fire and burned, supposed out of revenge by Friery, on his being prevented carrying on a courtship with Shields' sister; accused discharged. Further exertions of police without effect.
3	Ditto - - -	Mathew Reid, farmer -	20 Aug. 1870	Philpotstown -	Informations, 21st August -	- - -	- -	- - -	A range of out offices, a quantity of hay and corn, value 1,000 *l.*, set on fire and burned; motive, being unpopular with the workmen in his neighbourhood; compensation sought. Exertions of police unsuccessful.
1	Robbery - -	Margaret Miles, dealer -	13 Feb. 1871	Navan, T. - -	Informations, 13th February -	James Beirnes -	Promptly arrested.	James Beirnes -	Money to the amount of 6 *l.* 12 *s.* 6 *d.* taken out of a box. For trial at assizes.
1	Cattle stealing -	William Shaffery, farmer	15 Sept. 1870	Colliaghtown -	Informations, 17th September	- - -	- -	- - -	A heifer stolen off lands. Endeavours to trace without effect.
2	Sheep stealing -	James Mulvany, farmer -	15 Oct. 1870	Drinadaly - -	Informations, 16th October -	- - -	- -	- - -	A sheep killed on lands; compensations sought. Exertions of police unsuccessful.
3	Cattle stealing -	John Grehan, farmer -	21 Dec. 1870	Knockstown -	Informations, 21st December -	Thomas Kenny -	Promptly arrested.	Thomas Kenny -	A heifer stolen; accused arrested in Dublin; tried at commission, and sentenced to 12 months' imprisonment.
4	Cattle stealing -	Robert Grerson, farmer -	2 Feb. 1871	Clongiffen - -	Informations, 6th February -	- - -	- -	- - -	A bullock stolen off lands. Exertions to trace it as yet unsuccessful.

COUNTY OF MEATH.—RETURN of Offences reported to the Judges of Assize.—Spring Assizes, 1871—*continued.*

No.	NATURE OF OFFENCE.	NAME OF INJURED PERSON.	Date of Offence.	Place where Committed, *i. e.*—Town or Townland. *Note.*—T. denotes "Town."	WHETHER RENDERED AMENABLE TO JUSTICE, AND THE RESULT IN EACH CASE.				
					If Informations have been Lodged, when? If not, why not?	Names of Persons Accused or Suspected.	Number of Attempts to Detect or Arrest the Offenders in each Case.	Names of Persons Arrested or made amenable.	OBSERVATIONS AND RESULTS.
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
1	Robbery of arms	Robert Shields, farmer	23 Dec. 1870	Gibbonstown	Informations, 25th December 1870.				A party of three men forced their way into Shields' house and carried away a gun; on the occurrence of this outrage, he was granted police protection, as in May last he was fired at through a window of his dwelling; motive, revenge, as described in No. 2 of this Return, under head of "Malicious Burning."
1	Intimidation	Joseph Glennan, farmer	16 Aug. 1870	Galboystown	Informations, 17th August 1870.				A party of three men went to Glennan's house and demanded admittance; were refused; on which they threatened him, should he continue to mow his corn; they then fired two shots and left. The exertions of police to discover the perpetrators without effect.
2	Intimidation and administering an unlawful oath.	Edward Rispin, farmer	29 Nov. 1870	Kildalkey	Informations, 5th December 1870.				A party of about eight men went to Rispin's house, entered, administered an unlawful oath, and threatened to shoot him should he continue to speak disparagingly of Fenians or Ribbonmen. Exertions of the police to discover the perpetrators without success.
3	Ditto	Mathew Brennan, herd	4 Dec. 1870 15 Feb. 1871	Crossanstown	Informations, 5th December 1870, and 16th February 1871.				On 4th December a party of 12 men went to Brennan's house, and cautioned him to give up a certain "take," from which a tenant had been evicted some time previously; and again on night of 15th February three men came to him and administered an unlawful oath, to give up the place; motive, not so much to injure Brennan, but to inconvenience M'Garry, in whose employment he is.

4	House attack and intimidation, &c.	James Reilly, labourer -	25 Jan. 1871	Cakestown - -	Informations, 26th January 1871.	- - -	- -	- - -	A party of seven men came to Reilly's, two of whom (with blackened faces) entered, presented a revolver, assaulted Reilly's son, and then ran off; motive, jealousy on the part of his fellow workmen. Exertions of police unsuccessful.
5	Intimidation and administering an unlawful oath.	Thomas Kiernan, farmer	12 Feb. 1871	Commonstown -	Informations, 13th February 1871.	- - -	- -	- - -	As Kiernan was returning from Kells on his car, he was met by four men, two of whom held the horse, the other two ordered him off the car, presented pistols at him, and swore him on a book against taking grass lands. Police are unceasing in their effort to discover the perpetrators.
1	Threatening letters -	James Shaw, stationmaster	12 Oct. 1870 15 Oct. 1870	Trim, T. - -	Informations, 12th October and 31st October.	- - -	- -	- - -	Two threatening letters received by Mr. Shaw, viz., on 12th and 31st October, supposed written by porters and others in the employment of the Railway Company, to whom Mr. Shaw was obnoxious, owing to his strictness in the discharge of duty. Police protection granted; further exertions unsuccessful.
2	Threatening letter -	Mathew Gilshenan, farmer	15 Feb. 1871	Ardglasson - -	None sworn - - - -	- - -	- -	- - -	Threatening letter received, supposed sent by labourers out of work to induce Mr. Gilshenan to give them employment. Exertions to discover the writer without effect.

Trim, 24 February 1871.

J. R. Gibbons, County Inspector.

REPORT

FROM THE

SELECT COMMITTEE

ON

WESTMEATH, &c. (UNLAWFUL COMBINATIONS);

TOGETHER WITH THE

PROCEEDINGS OF THE COMMITTEE,

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE,

AND APPENDIX.

Ordered, by The House of Commons, *to be Printed,*
31 *March* 1871.

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INDEX

TO THE

REPORT

FROM THE

SELECT COMMITTEE

ON

WESTMEATH, &c. (UNLAWFUL COMBINATIONS).

Ordered, by The House of Commons, *to be Printed*,
31 *March* 1871.

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J.

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L.

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1. *As to the Police Arrangements in the Disturbed Districts.*
2. *As to the Military Organisation of the Police Force generally.*
3. *As to the discharge of Detective Duties.*
4. *As to the Introduction of various Improvements.*

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1. *Evidence relative to the Existence of Ribbonism in Westmeath.*
2. *Organisation of the Ribbon Society.*
3. *Form of Oath.*
4. *Scope of Action of the Society.*
5. *Leaders of the Movement.*
6. *Employment of Strangers as Assassins.*
7. *Question as to the Inefficiency of the present Law for the Suppression of the Evil.*
8. *Conclusions of the Committee.*

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